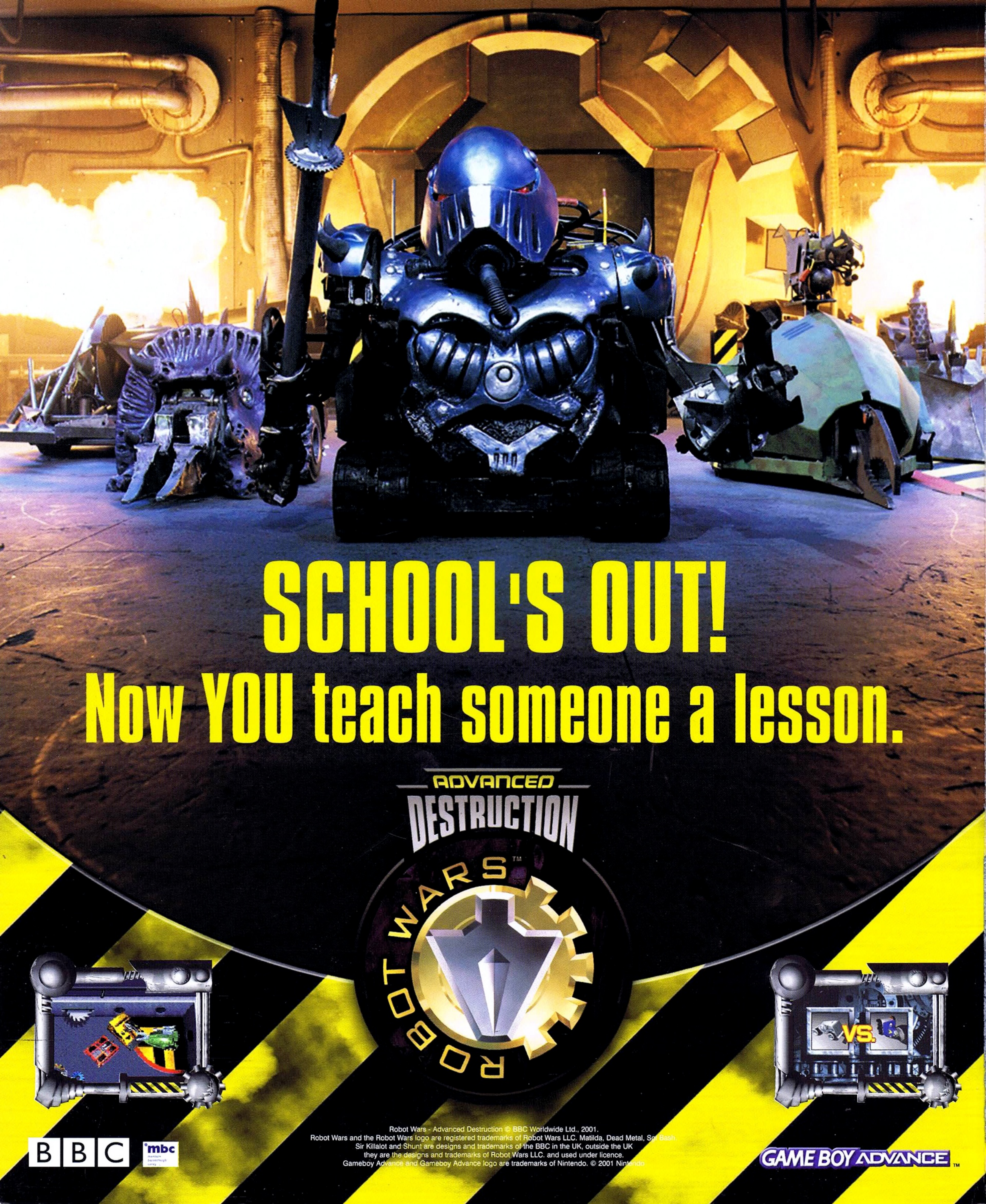

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FIRST GAMECUBE SHOTS of the kneecap-busting threequel!
NOSE MANUAL
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# WELCOME TO NGC MAGAZINE

This page is *supposed* to be your first port of call, you know. But I'm pretty sure most of you will have flicked straight to our exclusive *Star Wars: Rogue Leader* Special Investigation, as that's where some of videogaming's most belief-beggaring images lie. And if you did come here first – why? Get over to page 20 *right now* for all the best bits of Episodes IV, V and VI, brought to you in drop-dead gorgeous Gamecube-o-vision. Tasty.

### Plumb crazy

Using the giant **NGC** shoehorn, we managed to cram well over 150 massive Gamecube screenshots into this issue, from games as diverse as *Tony Hawk's 3*, *Super Smash Bros Melee* and *Sonic Adventure 2 Battle*. But that wasn't the only tight squeeze this month – we also had to find office space for over *300* model Luigis. That was the staggering response we had to our 'Create a Luigi' competition in **NGC**/59, and to thank you all for your efforts, we've taken a massive photo of every single entry (minus Geraint, who dressed up in blue-and-green dungarees and sent himself through the post in an effort to win a Gamecube). Shoot over to page 58 and see if you can spot your Luigi – you might even find it among the five winning entries.

### Gamecube discovers America

It might have all gone a bit quiet on the Gamecube front in Japan (hence this month's rather thin reviews section) but Nintendo's purple wondermachine is gathering support quicker than that big bloke off Pop Idol. The most important developers on the planet – Sega, Capcom, Acclaim, Activision, EA – are weighing in with heaps of brilliant games, and there's *no* chance of GC suffering a crippling N64-style games drought. Next issue will be testament to the approaching avalanche of tip-top titles – 18 (!) new games will be on US shelves in time for Gamecube's launch there, and we'll be reviewing as many as we can squeeze in, including *XGIII*, *Crazy Taxi*, *Madden 2002* and *that Star Wars* game. You'd be a fool to miss it – so don't.

Tim Weaver
**EDITOR**

## JUST LOOK WHAT WE'VE GOT FOR YOU THIS MONTH!




### OUR PROMISE TO YOU

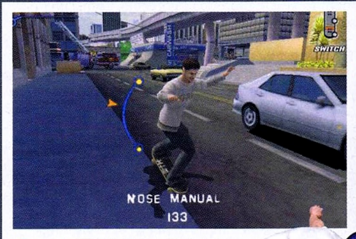
**Because we're not tied to Nintendo, only NGC can deliver the most reliable news and reviews first. We answer to no-one except you, the reader, which is why we promise you can trust what you read – every single issue.**

**NGC THE UK'S BEST-SELLING INDEPENDENT NINTENDO MAG**

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ISSUE 62, CHRISTMAS 2001

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Latest pics of the big games!






## PLANET GB
The only GB mag you need!



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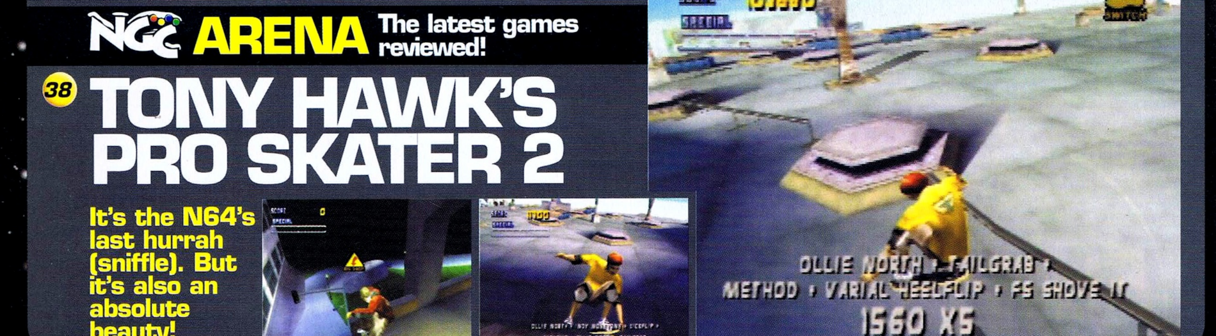


## NEWS PLUS
More on issues that matter



## COMING SOON
Updates on the big titles!






# NGC ARENA The latest games reviewed!





## CLUB NGC 63

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**Third game, and the Hawkster's looking better than ever.**

FUTURE LOOK

Your first look at the big games

This time round you'll be up against even more street-based mayhem, so go carefully.

The animation on the riders has to be seen to be believed. Incredible.

# TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOAR

## a skate




The park and courses are bigger than ever before, making room for some top stuntage.

**INFO BURST**

| | |
|---|---|
| TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATEBOARDING 3 | |
| DEVELOPER: | Neversoft |
| PUBLISHER: | Activision |
| HOW MANY PLAYERS: | 2 |
| RUMBLE FUNCTION: | Yes |
| ONLINE PLAY: | No |
| NUMBER OF DISCS: | 1 |
| GBA LINK-UP: | No |

WHEN'S IT OUT?

| US | UK | Japan |
|---|---|---|
| Nov 18 | Spring | TBA |

ANTICIPATION RATING: 4

Ever since it appeared on the PlayStation kick-flipping and screaming, *Tony Hawk's* has been a *massive* success, and you don't have to look too far to see why.

With each and every new version on every other platform, *Tony's* silky skating system becomes smoother still. The developers could have gone for the old adage of 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it,' but thankfully they haven't – they just keep tweaking it here, adding extras there and polishing it damn-near everywhere – and it's far more apparent this time round.

The third in the series is looking splendid. The first thing you'll need to get your head around is the sheer size of the




Old enough to be your dad, and still wearing his daps from PE. Shameful.

Gameplay is essentially the same, but far more refined.

These blue bars have been added to help you keep your balance when grinding.

# PRO DING 3 to victory

new environments. Whether you're grinding down rails in downtown Tokyo or dodging cars on a busy Parisian street, you'll be hard pushed to keep track of where you actually are in relation to anywhere else. On top of this, the visuals have come on in leaps and bounds.

## The visuals have come on in leaps and bounds

The near photo-realism of the skaters is remarkable, and the animation is better yet – making your lightning-quick combo handiwork all the more rewarding in the replays.

Of course, no *Tony Hawk's* would be complete without a bewildering array of options to get stuck into and naturally, *TH3* doesn't disappoint. From the infinitely more detailed create-a-skater mode to the all-important multiplayer, *everything* is looking, sounding and playing even better than ever before. Add grunge and breakbeat tracks, along with FMV footage of your pro-skating favourites, into the mix, and you're looking at another board-riding masterpiece that refuses to rest on its laurels. **NGC**

FUTURE LOOK
Your first look at the big games

The character models and voice acting are excellent.

# GALLEON
## legal game piracy





Confounding Factor's adventure is a curious one, and no mistake. We frequently run into difficulty trying to explain how you can run, jump, climb and perform impressive acrobatics without pressing any buttons…

Remember how impressed you were when Link ran towards a gap, only to flip into the air automatically or tiptoe off depending on how you manipulated the stick? Extend that concept to the whole game and you have an idea of how *Galleon* works. If that sounds too simple, rest assured that there's plenty of depth – not



Rhama is very versatile, offering a range of moves.

**INFO BURST**

| GALLEON | |
|---|---|
| DEVELOPER: | Confounding Factor |
| PUBLISHER: | Interplay |
| HOW MANY PLAYERS: | 1 |
| RUMBLE FUNCTION: | Yes |
| ONLINE PLAY: | No |
| NUMBER OF DISCS: | 1 |
| GBA LINK-UP: | No |

WHEN'S IT OUT?
US: March · UK: Spring · Japan: TBA

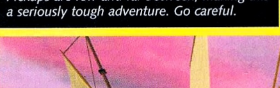
ANTICIPATION RATING: 4/5

The battle system is superb, offering plenty of depth to change tactics for the wide variety of enemies you meet.

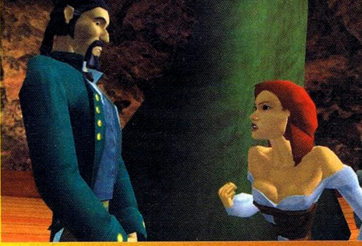
only can you reach your destination by a number of different routes, but combat is pretty intriguing as well. Either lock on and carefully time a lunge, or just wade in and flail about like a loon. Some of the more interesting moves include shoving an enemy in the shoulder or grabbing hold of them and punching them repeatedly in the stomach. It's all staggeringly cinematic to watch, and that's to say nothing of the unique system for issuing orders to your companions, Faith and Mihoko.

You can either simply instruct your friends to go to a specific location by any means they can, or you can tell them to get on with a particular task, such as independently beating up the enemy (Mihoko's speciality) or being attractive yet useless (Faith). You can even throw Faith up in the air and either catch her or get her to land on a higher platform. All this introduces an intelligent aspect that belies the simple premise. Shame it's been delayed on all formats until next year, but it should be well worth the wait. **NGC**

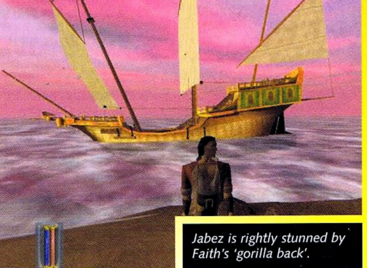




Pickups are few and far between, making this a seriously tough adventure. Go careful.



What adventure would be complete without the services of a feisty (and busty) young maiden? Galleon is no exception.



Jabez is rightly stunned by Faith's 'gorilla back'.






It might just be us, but if we were being pursued by angry ski patrols, we wouldn't be boarding in day-glo pink salapettes.

# DARK winter warning

Now here's an interesting little number. *Dark Summit* looks, to all intents and purposes, like your average extreme sports snowboarding sim – much like *1080°* or *SSX*. This time however, developers Radical Entertainment are adding an ingenious twist to the proceedings, which comes in the shape of an interesting action-adventure element.

*Dark Summit* will be the first snowboarding game to incorporate mission-based play. In conjunction with the usual high-flying trick-busting, you'll be required to satisfy a number of objectives, such as escaping from pursuing helicopter patrols and disgruntled ski-bound attackers. Taking control of female character Naya, this story-driven game will follow her dangerous exploits over a healthy 45 different levels, each with its own demanding challenges that need to be overcome. Succeed in these and you'll open more and more secrets, unlock new chair-lifts and subsequently more locations for you to explore on the game's *massive* mountain.

There are also five extra characters available to use, each with their own specific attributes. By riding the mountainside like a pro, pulling off tricks and successfully completing the missions, you get to boost your status and your

**Tons of on-screen activity, and not a hint of slowdown.**

**INFO BURST**

| DARK SUMMIT | |
|---|---|
| DEVELOPER: | Radical Ent. |
| PUBLISHER: | THQ |
| HOW MANY PLAYERS: | 1/2 |
| RUMBLE FUNCTION: | Yes |
| ONLINE PLAY: | No |
| NUMBER OF DISCS: | 1 |
| GBA LINK-UP: | No |

WHEN'S IT OUT? US: 18 Nov · UK: Spring · Japan: TBA

ANTICIPATION RATING

Courses are spread over the mountain, offering plenty of high-speed thrills.

Insert hilarious-yet-infantile 'chopper' joke here... please.

# SUMMIT




reputation, again helping you unlock new features.

As you can see from the shots, it's all looking very colourful, with nicely modelled characters and superbly realised scenery. The pace of the game is also very impressive, with Gamecube pushing out tons of on-screen activity without a hint of slowdown. It remains to be seen whether or not these action and story elements will enhance the game significantly – but from what we've seen so far, we'd say that this is more than just a gimmick. **NGC**

It's hard to tell whether the mission-based boarding will work for now, but it's certainly made everyone curious.



We weren't expecting this, but judging from the footage we saw, DS looks like shaping up to be a very interesting little number.

The best news from the biggest sources – every month

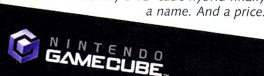
# NEWSDESK



P14 **TOKYO GAME NO-SHOW**
*Zoiks! A worrying lack of games at the TGS – still, at least what there was looked damn good.*

P15 **SEGA HEDGE THEIR BETS**
*Are Sega getting cold feet about GC? We poke the rumour ashes.*

P15 **THE Q STARTS HERE**
*The shiny DVD-cube hybrid finally gets a name. And a price.*




**NINTENDO GAMECUBE UNVEILS IN EUROPE**
**Spring 2002 Launch for The Only Dedicated Games Console Of The New Era**

Nintendo – the world's most successful video games company – is proud to unveil its new home console at the Nintendo Show. The only new games console to be dedicated solely to playing games – it marks the next, and arguably most significant, chapter in the company's 110 year history. Nintendo GameCube will launch in Europe, in spring 2002.

Nintendo

GAMING 24:7

**Nintendo GameCube Launch Statement**

Comments David Gosen, Managing Director, Nintendo of Europe:-

"We have never specified an exact date for the launch of Nintendo GameCube in Europe and, as previously indicated, we will not be in a position to announce a [illegible]til after we have seen how the launches have gone in Japan and the US."

*How the official line changes… Back in September, Nintendo promised that "Gamecube will launch in spring 2002 in Europe." Now, David Gosen isn't so sure. We're unlikely to receive a final release date for a good while yet.*

# GAMECUBE UK JUNE 2002?

## Nintendo Europe may miss promised spring launch.

**By Mark Green**

As Gamecube gears up for a spectacular launch in the US, Europe is steeling itself for a delay to the console's arrival, as the originally announced date of spring 2002 threatens to slip back to June.

According to game trade magazine MCV, the worrying rumour was doing the rounds during Microsoft's X01 event in Cannes, where Xbox's European launch date of March 14th was announced. Some counter-rumours have since suggested that the gossip was actually generated by Microsoft themselves in an effort to cast GC in an unflattering light – regardless, if the news *is* true, Gamecube is likely to have an uphill struggle against a console that will have enjoyed a whopping three-month headstart on the shelves.

It's still due in spring, says Nintendo of Europe's Head of PR, Shelly Friend.

"[Xbox's] £299 price point could have been a problem," a senior games boss in the know told MCV. "But if Gamecube doesn't arrive until summer, Microsoft will have three months to establish their machine before Nintendo get a foot in the door."

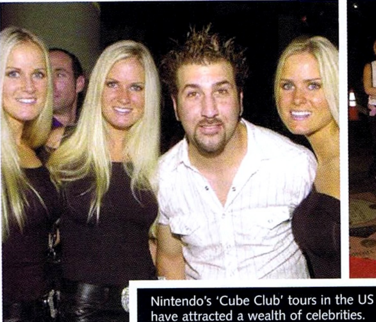
Adding to the intrigue, Nintendo of Europe took the rare step of reacting against the tittle-tattle. Managing Director, David Gosen, issued a curt statement hours after the story broke. "We have never specified an exact date for the launch of Gamecube in Europe. As previously indicated, we will not be in a position to announce a date until after we have seen how the launches have gone in Japan and the US."

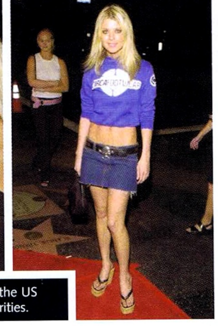
### Blind date

As Nintendo were confidently predicting a spring 2002 launch as late as September, that seems a hasty attempt by Nintendo to cover their tracks in preparation for a confirmation of a delay. But Nintendo of Europe's Head of PR, Shelly Friend, says that the original date still holds.

"The plan is still spring 2002," Shelly told us. "But until we've got data from the US launch on November 18th, and seen how stock availability worldwide affects both America and Japan, we won't be deciding on an exact European date." She poured scorn on the original sources of the rumours. "We don't know a date," she claimed. "So it's hardly likely that other people do."

Stock availability, though, is likely to prove the biggest hold-up to Gamecube as it makes its ponderous journey to Europe. Nintendo is confident that all 700,000 machines





Nintendo's 'Cube Club' tours in the US have attracted a wealth of celebrities.

earmarked for the stateside launch will be ready for November 18th – 350,000 were already piled high in US warehouses by mid-October – but the sheer demand for Gamecubes is likely to mean Europe will have to sit tight while more machines are diverted to America. Online retailer amazon.com allocated every single one of its initial batch of Gamecubes to pre-ordering customers in five minutes; Toysrus.com in just eight.

So are Nintendo trying to avoid fighting a console war on two fronts? "It's almost a certainty that Nintendo will maintain the flow of Gamecubes into America at the expense of Europe," believes Diarmid Clarke of *Galleon* coders Confounding Factor. "But that's better for Gamecube in the long run. If they sacrificed US stock, all those potential American customers would simply buy an Xbox instead – and there's no guarantee the machines they diverted to Europe would actually sell there."

### Death of a sales plan?

Nintendo obviously intend to study US sales for a good few months, as they reportedly have no plans to even hint at a final date for European Gamecubes until December 2001 or January 2002. That doesn't necessarily rule out a spring launch – Game Boy Advance's final date was revealed just three months before the portable wondermachine landed on shop shelves – but it makes the logistics of launching in March or April prohibitively complicated.

We'll have on-site reports back from Gamecube's US launch in **NGC**/63 – and we'll be first to pester Nintendo for word on how those initial sales figures affect the UK release. **NGC**

# WIN!
## 5 GAMECUBE CD-ROMS

As part of their huge publicity blitz in the US, Nintendo are giving away these diddy CD-ROMs for PC/Mac, packed with Gamecube footage, screensavers and the like. They're usually only available in America, but thanks to Nintendo UK, we've smuggled five discs into Blighty – and *you* could bag one. Simply read this question…

Who's the author behind this month's romantic Thrills 'n' Swoon stories?

…then pop the answer down on a postcard and wing it off to: Spin on this!, **NGC** Magazine, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. Closing date is Friday 14th Dec.







# STOP PRESS!
## MULTI REGION GAMECUBE

Bought a Japanese Gamecube and want to play US games? Keen on a US machine but worried about missing the big games from the East? Well in that case you can unfurrow your brow – because Gamecube *is* chippable.

Apparently, a simple switch soldered onto a Japanese Gamecube's innards will allow you to play American games. The proof? Those who've already adapted their machines receive a "This game is not suitable for this region" message after inserting a Japanese disc – suggesting the console's expecting a US game.

Charlie Ambrose of CA Games (0141 334 3901) should be offering the modification by the time you read this. "We're going to test it when the first US games arrive," he says. "If it works, we'll be able to sell modified Japanese Gamecubes as multi-region machines – then there'll be no need to buy a US machine at all."

No news yet, though, on whether UK machines or games will be so easily messed with to be multi-region compatible. **MG**








# TOKYO GAME NO-SHOW

## Few Nintendo titles – although *ISS* is confirmed

Nintendo have never been ones to attend the Tokyo Game Show – having hosted their own Spaceworld show only a couple of months ago – so it's unsurprising that Gamecube first-party offerings were absent this year.

Still, if you looked hard enough past the rather underwhelming attending crowds, there were a number of interesting third-party offerings to try out. Strangely, it was Sega who had the most to offer, both displaying and announcing games such as the vastly-improved *Sonic Adventure 2* (complete with extra multi-player modes), *Phantasy Star Online* and *Virtua Striker 3*.

Next up were Hudson who had *Bomberman Generations* available to play, along with the totally unexpected *Bloody Roar Extreme*, a *Tekken*-style beat-'em-up which lets you transform yourself into an animal. Although these aren't exactly the most hotly-anticipated titles on the planet, both were great-looking games that had clearly been in development for some time – especially *Bloody Roar*, which was virtually indistinguishable from the arcade version.

From Software's *Rune* also made another appearance alongside yet *another* RPG entitled *Gold Star Mountain*. The former, it's safe to say, is looking much better than it did at E3, with its card-based battles offering some curiously unique gameplay elements. *Gold Star Mountain* also looked like it was shaping up rather well. From what we could tell, it involves a gun-wielding character who employs the use of animal sidekicks which he raises, breeds and trains.

Last – and perhaps best of all – was the news that Konami's *ISS 2002* is coming to Cube. Sure enough, there it was in fully playable form on the floor. What's *better* is the fact that, although it's still some way off completion, it looked and played rather well.

So there you have it. While not exactly brimming with excitement, TGS again showed that Gamecube does have third-party support – none of which is of dubious quality. We'll have more news over the coming months. **GE**




*ISS and Bloody Roar Extreme – two important titles for Ninty and Gamecube.*

## VIRTUAL REALITY

**NINTENDO GAMING MOMENTS 'COME TRUE'.**

**THIS MONTH: Gobbling some wild mushrooms to gain magical powers, Mario-style!**

**THE TEST: Alan grabs himself a handful of nature's finest and 'chows down'. "I love-a mushrooms!" he shouts.**




**RESULT: Intense stomach pain, death.**



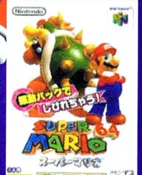

## WRESTLE MANIA



Acclaim have recruited ex-wrestler 'Captain' Lou Albano to provide the commentary for their upcoming rassle-fest, *Legends of Wrestling*. Not the kind of news we'd normally take an interest in – were it not for the fact that Mr Albano played Mario in '80s TV show 'The Super Mario Bros Super Show', and gave us 'Do The Mario', a show-closing song-and-dance routine that has us weeping with laughter every time we see it. Welcome back to the fold, Lou. **MG**

## WHAT IS MARIO J?

Interesting, this. Some early Japanese Gamecube manuals feature a mysterious game called *Super Mario Version J* on the screenshot used to demonstrate the memory card menu. There's also a bizarre reference to new versions of *Donkey Kong 64* and *Pokémon*. Later manuals have *Mario* removed, and *Luigi's Mansion* put in its place – what are Ninty hiding? **MG**

# SEGA HEDGE THEIR BETS

## Gamecube no longer focus for Japanese giant?



As Sega continued to divvy out their extensive AAA back-catalogue among the next-generation consoles at the Tokyo Game Show, Gamecube appeared to miss out on the biggest games. But encouraging rumours suggest Nintendo's box is *still* Sega's platform of choice.

The latest game to officially join the 'cube's cause is Dreamcast pirate adventure, *Skies of Arcadia*. Developed by Overworks, which contains many of the team from the original *Phantasy Star* games, it sees you traversing a massive, *fully 3D* world in a big airship. This is easily loooking like one of the finest RPG's in existence and is very welcome on GC.

The eyes of Shenmue's Ryo – could they be staring at you from a Gamecube screen soon?

Together with this news, there have been rumours flying around like nobody's business. Sonic Team's highly acclaimed Saturn classic *NiGHTS* is allegedly in the works, as are new versions of Yu Suzuki's *Outrun* and *Space Harrier*.

Unfortunately, it's hard to differentiate between plain fact, and blind hope on the part of rumour-mongers. Still, many sources inside Sega have hinted at a resurgence and reworking of old classics, so it's difficult *not* to start speculating – especially when prominent Sega staff like Charles Bellfield (VP of Strategic Planning and Corporate Affairs) has this to say: "Gamecube gives us a great opportunity with the likes of *Sonic*... plus a whole sweet bunch of other stuff that we haven't announced yet. I know what it is and you don't, ha-ha!". The tease. Another juicy morsel slipped out after the announcement that Microsoft had bought the exclusive rights to *Shenmue 2* in the US. Amid fears that the franchise may never appear on anything other than Gates' ugly black monstrosity, Charles reported that Sega has "multiple tactics across all of our development teams, and Yu Suzuki isn't going to simply port *Shenmue 2* to the Xbox." The mind boggles. **GE**



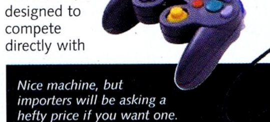

Outrun *on the left is a maybe;* Arcadia *is for definite.*

# THE Q STARTS HERE

Panasonic have christened their gorgeous Gamecube-DVD hybrid 'Q', and have revealed plans to launch it in Japan on December 14th for around ¥39,800 (£230) – around £100 more than Nintendo's standard non-DVD playing Gamecube.

The chrome machine, which plays Gamecube games, Region 2 DVD movies, music CDs and Video CDs, comes complete with a fancy remote control and a customised charcoal GC joypad embossed with Panasonic's logo rather than Nintendo's. Panasonic – or Matsushita, as they're known in Japan – have made no secret of the fact that Q is designed to compete directly with PlayStation 2, which plays DVDs straight out of the box.

There are no plans to release Q in the US or UK, and it's unlikely the shiny wonder will ever see the light of a British day. But if you're reading this before November 12th, there's still time – just – to enter our competition in NGC/60 to win a Q. Get to it! **MG**



*Nice machine, but importers will be asking a hefty price if you want one.*

# A.W.O.L

**We track down the Nintendo gaming heroes that time forgot.**





## Mike

**Who?** Mike was the star of Nintendo's RPG/adventure *StarTropics* on the NES. Taking control of Mike, it was up to you to find your archaeologist uncle, Dr J, who went missing while investigating a rock *(Eh? – Tim)*. Armed only with a yo-yo, sturdy boots and the carelessly strewn bounty found on cave floors, you were forced to battle lethal 'Mud-O-Fish' and 'Ninja-Monkeys' (not a joke).

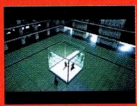
**Where is he now?** Well, judging by the state of his shoes, Mike currently spends most of his time aerating the green at the local council's Amateur Bowls Club.

LAKITU'S LENS

# TENDO ON THE TELLY

Nintendo of America's Gamecube marketing campaign is in full swing, and viewers of major TV channels – including MTV – have been treated to this nicely stylish ad. Beats 'The Third Place' to a pulp, eh?





















# STATE OF PLAY

WITH ALAN MADDRELL

It's nice to have a good old barney. Reviewing Gamecube games caused a decent chinwag round the office – with hundreds of titles around the corner, all of which will be compared to the launch titles, it was important to get the scores right.

Take *Luigi's Mansion*, for example. It's enjoyable enough, but up against the likes of *Mario 64*, it coughs and quietly shuffles aside, having nothing of the epoch-making, epic splendour of the first real 3D game. And what's more, it's short. Surprisingly short.

So why 90 per cent, eh? Well, after some lengthy debates, we decided that a review score in itself is not really a purchase guide. That's what the text is for. For example, *Luigi* really is excellent fun and solidly made – hence the 90 – but not worth buying if you're looking for a way to fill countless idle nights. So not everyone will buy it – but then it's a bit like specific game genres. *Street Fighter* is a game that we'd happily recommend, but you wouldn't catch me buying it in a thousand years, such is my impeccable taste. So if review scores are to mean anything, they have to reflect how enjoyable a game is to play – not whether we'd buy it, or its value for money. As it happens, *Luigi* is about as good a five-day rental title as you're ever likely to find.

And it looks like that's the direction Nintendo are heading in – brilliantly enjoyable games that are a bit more like interactive movies with impressive set pieces. Take the new *Zelda*, for example. We've already seen that it's packed with more 'fun' moments than we're used to. Chances are the experience will be more linear and less open-ended than *Ocarina of Time* or *Majora's Mask*. Whatever your thoughts are on this change, it's time to get used to a new style of Nintendo gaming.






# NINTENDO AT THE BAFTAS

## Multiple nominations for N64 and GBA.

Normally we can't be bothered to sit through countless hours of blathering award ceremonies, but this year should be worth it. Industry body BAFTA have nominated some Nintendo products for their contributions to the field of Interactive Entertainment.

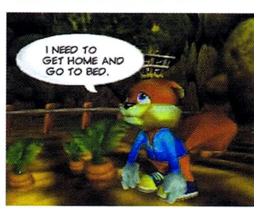
*Mario Kart: Super Circuit* receives a nomination under the category of "Games – Mobile", being cited for "smooth graphics, addictive gameplay, link-up and plenty of challenges". Sounds fair – and we reckon it has a good chance of wiping the floor with the mobile phone games in the same class. Similarly, *Conker's Bad Fur Day* has been praised for the fantastic use of sound technology. Not only does the game cram more speech and high-quality music onto one cart than we thought possible, but the effects, songs and tunes are apt, dramatic and hilarious.

Last year, Nintendo games did equally well, with *Perfect Dark* picking up an award for 'Moving images' (thanks for that), and *Pokémon Yellow* garnering acclaim in the mobile gaming category. *PD*'s motion-capturing work received special attention, resulting as it did in some of the finest character animation seen in videogames to date. And we don't need to tell you how rich, deep and engrossing the world of *Pokémon* is, which is to say nothing of the originality of the trading and battling facilities.




So, BAFTA clearly have taste. They're one of the few bodies that give awards, and a BAFTA is well worth having. No doubt they'd be overjoyed to learn that Rare snuck a trophy into the vault of the G5 Building in *Perfect Dark*.

As for next year… well, we'll mangons nos chapeaux if Gamecube doesn't win awards for simplicity, playability, graphical splendour. And being much better than either of the oppositions' consoles. **AM**




*Rare now have another BAFTA to add the two they won in 1998, below.*



**STOP PRESS:** *Conker's Bad Fur Day*'s swearing and bleeping picked up the Best Sound award at the ceremony. Top work, Rare.

# NINTY SECRETS

The website of Nintendo Benelux (that's Belgium-Netherlands-Luxembourg, fact fans) has revealed that Nintendo are quietly beavering away on a whopping 25 Gamecube titles that have yet to be announced.

Amongst the top secret titles are a "very special Pokémon game" and "a racer that's at least as special." *F-Zero GC*? *Mario Kart*? Some kind of *Gran Turismo 3* beater? We can't wait to find out. Expect The Big N to spill a portion of beans at next year's E3 and Spaceworld shows. **MG**

# PORTACUBE

US peripheral manufacturer Interact have announced the release of an add-on LCD screen for Gamecube, which will allow you to play *Luigi's Mansion* and the like anywhere you fancy.

Borrowing an idea conjured up by Sony for the diddy PSOne, Interact have fashioned a small five-inch colour screen that snaps onto the top of the Gamecube, and can be folded down when not in use. For aural purposes, two stereo speakers and a headphone socket are included on the facade, and there's even adjustable colour for those who like their *Wave Race*-ing in a deeper shade of blue. The battery pack included in the package will keep the Gamecube and the screen running for around two hours – or you can use a car adaptor to give you gaming on the road.

Interact's LCD screen will be joining Gamecube in shops on November 18th – it'll set you back a whopping $150 (£105), plus another $49.99 (£35) for the battery, which will be out in December. Madness. **MG**

*Yes – it makes GC look like a toilet. But Gamecube on the go shouldn't be sniffed at.*


Sunny Delight
Makes your mouth go mental



Illustration: Mark Mitchell

# LINK TO THE

**The new-look Zelda isn't just a visual departure for Nintendo. It's the first hint of a bold new Gamecube strategy. Mark Green explains.**

It took a few seconds for the crowd at Tokyo's Big Sight exhibition hall to cotton on to what was happening. Then the muttering began, and jaws began to drop open as realisation dawned. The simplistic 2D *Zelda* cartoon they were watching *wasn't* a jokey prelude to the Gamecube footage they'd been promised. *This was the actual game*.

As the 30-second Spaceworld video drew to a close with the childlike Link winking at the startled crowd, *Zelda* got what the earlier *Mario Sunshine* footage hadn't – a round of applause from the assembled journalists. Nintendo devotees, though, weren't quite so keen. Bile poured into chatrooms and message boards worldwide, the blind rage and confusion summed up with one simple question: "Why?"

There's an official answer to that – Shigeru Miyamoto's keenness to prevent the *Zelda* franchise from becoming stagnant. "The more realistic *Zelda* we showed last year *was* the one we were once working on," he told NGC. "But at the time we were experimenting, and trying to decide what direction the new game should take. Whenever we make a new *Zelda*, we want to make it as unique as possible. So I think the video we have shown this September is the course we should follow."

**"Nintendo are concerned some of their biggest games are only accessible to a small audience"**

### The long and the short of it

But NGC can reveal that *Zelda* is just one part of a bold new Nintendo strategy – a strategy that will see them move towards creating much shorter, simpler games than the likes of *Ocarina of Time*. The days of grand Nintendo epics, years in development and overflowing with 60-or-so hours of play, are over.

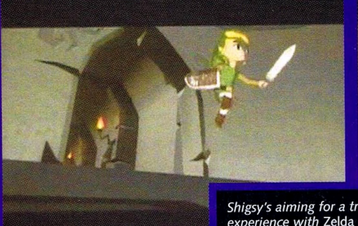
"Nintendo are concerned that some of their biggest games are only accessible to a small audience," a source close to Nintendo told us. "Take *Ocarina of Time*. Years of effort went into creating a huge, sprawling title that took weeks to complete – but how many people, aside from the real Nintendo fans, actually saw all of it? The majority of *Zelda* owners never got to the end. Essentially, all that hard work was wasted on them."

So Nintendo have a new plan. Smaller ideas, smaller budgets, smaller teams, and smaller games. Instead of investing years and millions upon millions of yen on a game only a small proportion of Gamecube owners – the so-called 'hardcore' – will fully appreciate, Shigsy and co will concentrate on creating shorter, more accessible titles that *everyone* can enjoy to the full.

### Churn 'em out!

*Zelda*'s new look reflects this new approach in two ways. The simple visuals are quick and relatively easy for Miyamoto's team to create, helping them knock out the game in two years rather than four. But, crucially, that cartoony look should appeal to a much wider cross-section of Gamecube owners, unlike *Ocarina of Time* and *Majora's Mask*'s D&D-style fantasy world. Children – Nintendo's most profitable customer base – especially.

In fact, Shigsy's *Zelda* comments post-Spaceworld subtly hinted at this new drive towards 'casual' gamers. "In the arcades," he told us, "if one coin-op receives rave reviews and becomes a



Shigsy's aiming for a truly cinematic experience with Zelda GC. We can't wait.

## NEW LOOK, NEW ANGER

**The best of the recent internet vitriol aimed at the new *Zelda*…**

"That first picture is a hoax. The shadows are all wrong. And look at the textures. The lighting effects aren't even noticeable. This is an obvious phoney – just ignore it people. We'll get the real *Zelda* tomorrow."

"Yeah, no doubt the new *Zelda* game will be good. But guess what – it's a good game for five-year-olds and I won't buy it because I am not five years old. It's always been *Mario* for the younger kids (although I still play it) and *Zelda* for the older kids. Nintendo have just screwed up that system."

"Arrrrrgggh! Do you guys really like kiddie stuff? Are you some sort of hardcore nerds? Just wanna know."

"It's embarrassing to be a *Zelda* fan now, because of this game. I'm now going to walk off a very high cliff. Bye…"

"I am in shock and in pain. This is like going back a whole generation. Why would Shigeru Miyamoto, who I respect highly, use such an ugly design for what is such a highly anticipated game? I don't know, Nintendo – you got me scared, guys. Please, show me something that will reinstate my faith in the Gamecube."

"I feel slapped in the face, and betrayed. You don't do this to gamers, it's not a good idea."

"Don't judge a game until you play it. Unless, of course, it's produced by Titus."

*With thanks to IGN*

# FUTURE

hit, the next year many similar games will follow the trend. In the movie industry, too – one hit, somebody else follows, and in the end only very avid movie-lovers can tell the difference. The general public can never tell these similar movies apart."

Nintendo – and especially president Hiroshi Yamauchi – are petrified that the biggest audience for videogames, the man, woman and child on the street, is losing interest. Games haven't achieved the 'must-have' permanence of movies or music, and there's a concern that they never will if the public don't get games they'll enjoy.

### The kid gloves are on

"The aim now is to avoid identikit sequels and 'special edition' games like *Majora's Mask*." says another source. "The target is more new ideas, fewer long-winded epics and more immediacy. Plus, shorter games means shorter development times – no N64-style lack of games this time."

Not convinced? If you've imported a Gamecube, the evidence is already staring you in the face. *Luigi's Mansion* is a superb game that **NGC** awarded 90 per cent – but it's a lot shorter than, say, *Ocarina of Time* or *Super Mario 64*. That's had the hardcore up in arms – but then aren't they likely to be scurrying out to buy it anyway? It's the *rest* of the market, less skilled gamers for whom it'll take weeks to arrive at *Luigi*'s final boss, who Nintendo are really after.

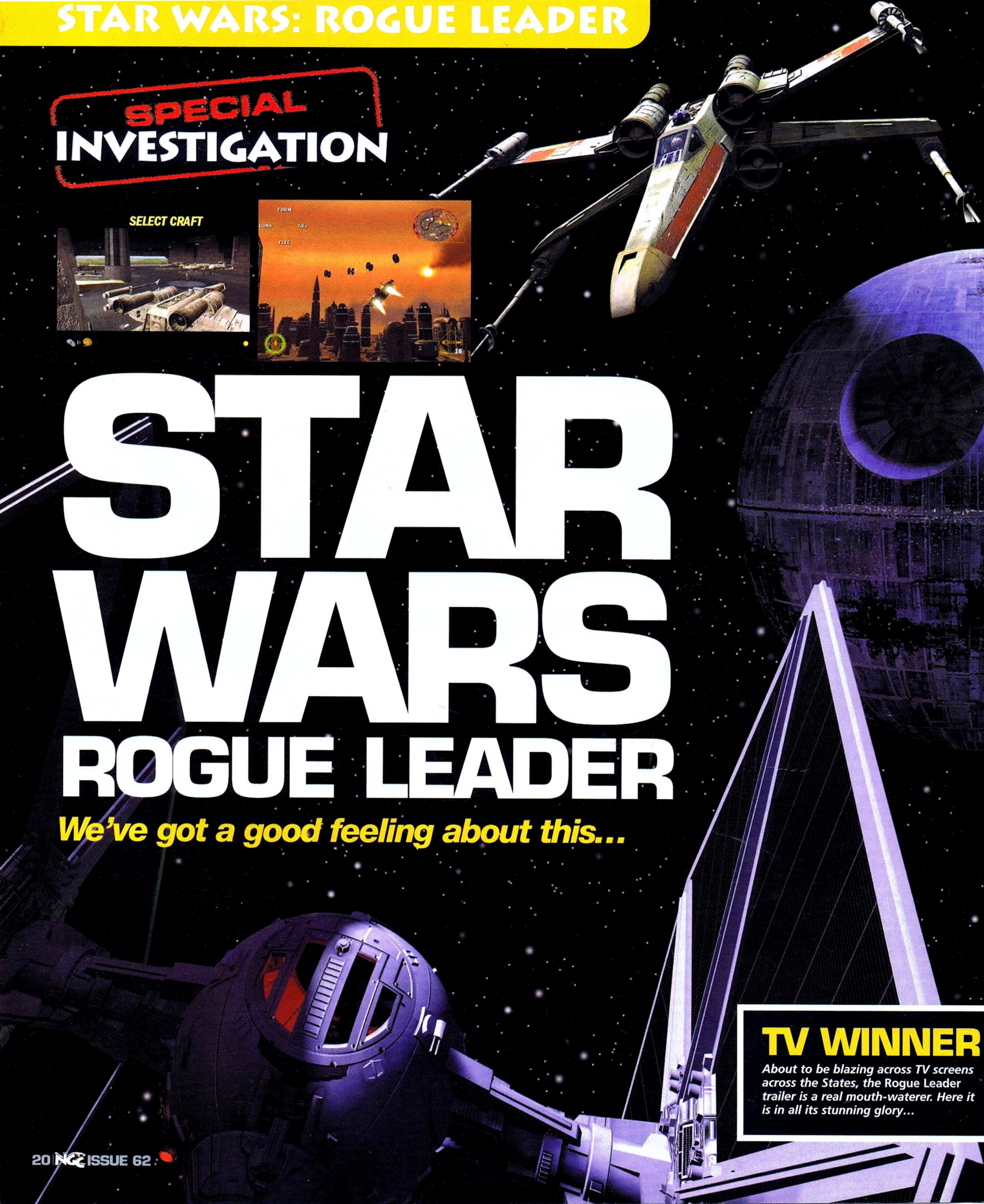
Which means the moans and groans from *Zelda* fans concerned at the 'kiddie' Link have spectacularly missed the point. Kids are exactly who Nintendo are gunning for. Children spend the most time playing the most games, and their ever-pestered parents have a near-unlimited amount of cash to pour into Nintendo's coffers. Any moves on Nintendo's part to make GC games more attractive, enjoyable and 'family-friendly' will reap huge rewards.

After humiliation at the hands of Sony, Nintendo have turned a crucial corner. Unlike N64, Gamecube will see a flood of Nintendo games, brimming with immediacy, accessibility and new ideas. The lack of a super-realistic, 80-hour *Zelda* is a small price to pay for the wonders ahead. **NGC**



The face that launched a million moans. And this from people who have no idea how Zelda on GC actually plays.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

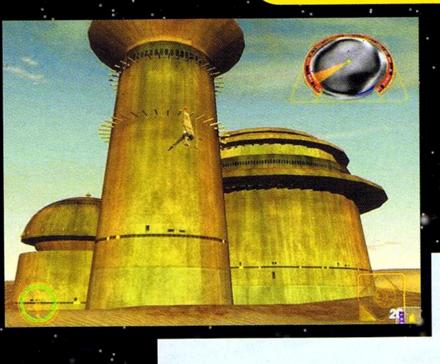



# STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER

**We've got a good feeling about this...**

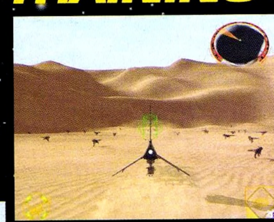
## TV WINNER

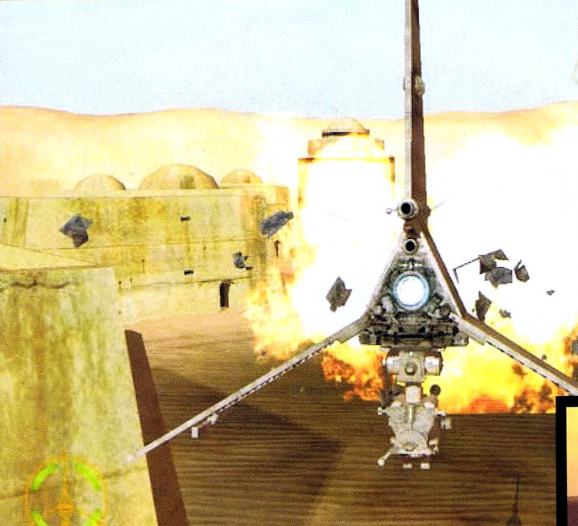
*About to be blazing across TV screens across the States, the Rogue Leader trailer is a real mouth-waterer. Here it is in all its stunning glory...*



# TATOOINE TRAINING

The game begins with you donning the sandals of Luke Skywalker and soaring over your home planet in your Y-Wing. It's a stunning start to the game – the desert landscape is immense and dotted with gobsmacking scenery, and the skies slowly redden as Tatooine's twin moons dip below the horizon. You even get to chase scampering Womprats in an oddly Jurassic Park-esque moment.







## INFO BURST

| STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER | |
|---|---|
| DEVELOPER: | Factor 5 |
| PUBLISHER: | Activision |
| HOW MANY PLAYERS: | 1 |
| RUMBLE FUNCTION: | Yes |
| ONLINE PLAY: | No |
| NUMBER OF DISCS: | 1 |
| GBA LINK-UP: | No |

WHEN'S IT OUT?

| US | UK | Japan |
|---|---|---|
| Now | Spring | TBA |

ANTICIPATION RATING

If we were allowed to give a game an anticipation rating of six out of five, this would be the one to get it. *Star Wars: Rogue Leader* is what every red-blooded Jedi apprentice has been dreaming about for 20 years – the chance to *be* Luke Skywalker in every blistering scene from Episodes IV, V and VI.

*Rogue Leader* is *exclusive* to Gamecube, and it's hard to see how a rival console could have done so stunning a job. Every Star Wars game in history has been hyped as looking 'just like the movies', but in this case, it's actually true. Everything – the X-Wings, the TIE Fighters, the Star Destroyers hanging menacingly in space, the endless desolate, wintry wastes of Hoth, the explosion that rips through the Death Star – is modelled perfectly on George Lucas' original groundbreaking models. To an innocent bystander, you might as well be watching Star Wars on DVD.

But what's it like to *play*? That's where we come in. Courtesy of LucasArts, we've sampled at length just about everything that *Star Wars: Rogue Leader* has to offer. We were blown away – over the following six pages, you will be, too...

long time ago in a galaxy far, ar away....

...an elite band of X-Wing pilots got their game on.



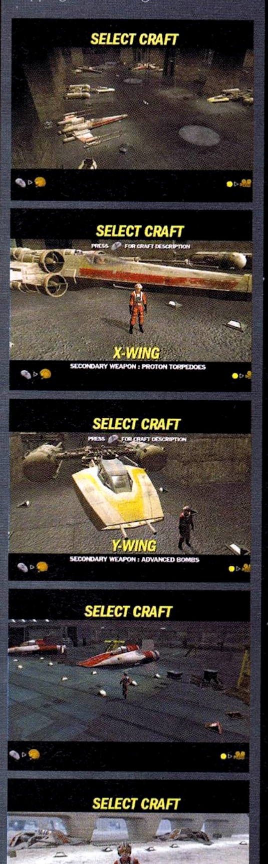






## CHOOSE YOUR CHARIOT

More detail's gone into *Rogue Leader's* craft select menu than in most other games in their entirety. You can actually *walk around* the hangar's colossal innards, exploring every curve of your craft before hopping in. Amazing.






One of those moments where words quite simply fail us.

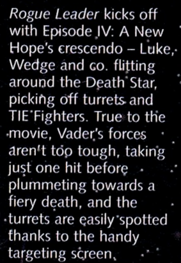
## MISSION 1: BATTLE OVER YAVIN



### THE TRENCH RUN

Not since Atari's original Star Wars: A New Hope coin-op – released waaay back in in the early '80s – have we had so much fun screaming through the Death Star trench, blowing up baddies and hearing Obi Wan's voice booming "Use the force, Luke!" in our ears. It's difficult not to physically duck as groups of TIE Fighters aim straight for your face, and you'll need all your analogue-stick skills to dive beneath the vertical 'bridges' that threaten to take your neck off – the speed is absolutely terrifying. Yeee-haaaa!

*Rogue Leader* kicks off with Episode IV: A New Hope's crescendo – Luke, Wedge and co. flitting around the Death Star, picking off turrets and TIE Fighters. True to the movie, Vader's forces aren't too tough, taking just one hit before plummeting towards a fiery death, and the turrets are easily spotted thanks to the handy targeting screen.

















# MISSION 2: RAZOR RENDEZVOUS

More classic Star Wars action as Luke and team head to Alderaan, under threat from another big grey planet-eater. Here, the Star Destroyer puts in its debut appearance – you start *miles* from it, so you can appreciate its full majesty as it slowly fills the entire screen.




See the way the TIE Fighter's own wing casts a shadow on the other side? Amazing.



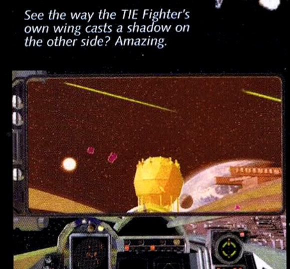



Dive right down to reach this Star Destroyer's vulnerable belly.





TIE Fighter pilots aren't stupid – they'll leg it if they think they're about to be killed.





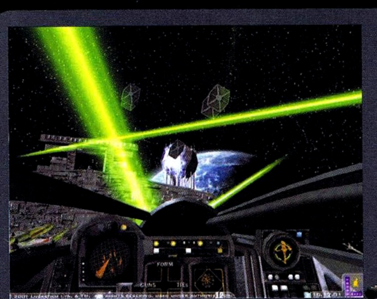





## SOUNDS LOGICAL

*Star Wars: Rogue Leader* supports Dolby's Pro Logic II surround sound. Meaning? If you're the proud (and rich) owner of a Pro Logic II decoder, you can plug your Gamecube into it and hear crisp, clear, surround sound via six speakers spread around the room – a cinema experience, basically, as the sound of lasers, ships and explosions echo around you. Mamma.

## LASERIUM



*Rogue Leader* does a superb job replicating the intense laser battles of the movies. Green, red and white streams of light criss-cross the screen like shooting stars, accompanied by noises sampled straight from the movies.









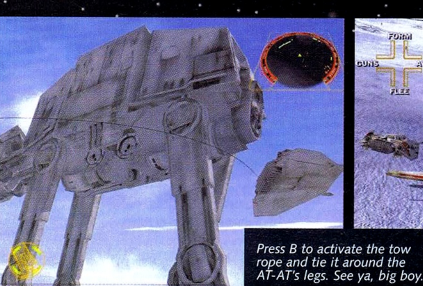




*Wonder if Chewbacca's sitting inside this Scout Walker? Wnnnngggnnnnggggnnn!*

# MISSION 3: BATTLE OF HOTH

A key scene from The Empire Strikes Back, recreated in breathtaking detail. Darth Vader's forces have mounted a ground-based attack on the Rebel's shield generator on the frozen ice-world, and your main job is to hop into a Snowspeeder and wrap tow ropes around the legs of the lumbering AT-ATs. Oh, and dive down to take the legs off Imperial Stormtroopers.



*Press B to activate the tow rope and tie it around the AT-AT's legs. See ya, big boy.*




*That's 'bump-mapping' on the ground there – the illusion of texturing on a 2D surface.*



*An incredible amount of detail on the ground troops there. Top work, F5.*

## ICE STORM

Slip your thumb over the Gamecube's D-pad and you can assume control of hordes of Rebel ground troops, who can be guided to attack the AT-ATs and AT-STs, defend Hoth's shield generators – or simply leg it. Your men are as impeccably-animated as everything else in *Star Wars: Rogue Leader* – just look at that guy peering through his binoculars, there. We'll wager that the death animations are something pretty spectacular, too. No blood, mind.











## EYE ON THE STARS

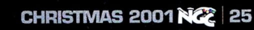
Several different views of the action are available in *Star Wars: Rogue Leader*, all accessed via the C-stick. What's that you say? This boxout is just a thin excuse to print more incredible shots of this stunning game in action? As if...

# MISSION 4: BATTLE OVER BESPIN

The gorgeous sunset skies of Cloud City – and the breathtaking disc of chrome buildings and mining complexes held aloft by relpulsor lifts – provide the setting for this hair-raising dogfight. TIE Fighters stream into the city en masse, as Stormtroopers in their natty black-and-white outfits pester you from atop buildings. Blaggards.

## BALLOON FIGHT

The giant balloons that hang above the city can be blown to smithereens by aiming at the gas-filled canisters secreted beneath their hulking main sections. The elastic balloon explodes with a satisfying 'whoomph' as the gas escapes – we've no doubt Lando Calrissian will bill you for the damage.



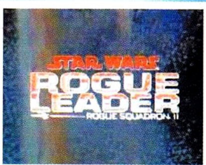
Volumetric fogging, the sight of which gets some people very excited. Including us.

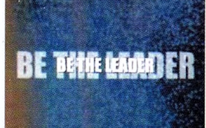
# MISSION 5: ISON CORRIDOR AMBUSH

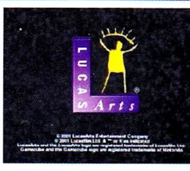
Arguably the best-looking *Rogue Squadron* level of all. Set in the midst of a foggy nebula, Ison Corridor Ambush is the mid-space Star Wars dogfight you've been dreaming of, with Luke and co battling to protect Rebel Transports from the swarms of TIE Fighters that emerge from the gloom. Tracking the TIES as they dip in and out of the sinister green fog is a real challenge – you'll need to roll, spin, somersault and barrel-roll your way to victory in this one.

Press A and this unlucky fella will get a photon torpedo straight in the face. Cackle.









The number of ships screaming around the screen at any one time is truly incredible.

If there was one overriding reason why Gamecube failed to sell out on its Japanese launch day, it was the lack of a 'killer app' – a game so irresistible, it was worth buying the system for. The US and UK, though, won't be missing that vital launch ingredient. They've got *Star Wars: Rogue Leader*.

From the opening screen, it's obvious why LucasArts' game will make Gamecube this Christmas' hottest potato in America. Just like its N64 prequel *Rogue Squadron*, which Tim awarded 85% waaay back in **NGC**/25, it's got the 'feel'. Video clips from the three classic movies play behind the menu screens, John Williams' spine-tingling score blares out in booming surround sound, and as you scroll through the missions and vehicles available, you'll recognise planets, ships and characters lifted directly from Episodes IV, V and VI.

But it's only when you're into the game proper that the full force (cough) of *Rogue Leader* hits you. As our exclusive screenshots testify, this game just looks unbelievable. Never has developer Factor 5's talent been more apparent than in the best bits of Luke Skywalker's triple-movie adventure – the Death Star trench run, the battle over snowy Hoth, the Cloud City attack are all recreated with the kind of detail that we'd have thought impossible on *any* console.

Approach a hulking Star Destroyer from a couple of miles away and your eyes will boggle at the size of the thing. But draw in close and you'll realise that the planet-sized ship isn't simply constructed of flat grey textures – every centimetre is packed with gun turrets, polished metal plates and raised sections, giving it an astonishingly realistic look. And there isn't a jagged line or fuzzy texture anywhere – it's as though the models used in the original films have somehow been injected straight into the *Rogue Leader* disc.

This attention to detail is present in every last polygon, from the dust and dirt on the wings of your X-Wing to the ruffles on the cape of an Imperial Stormtrooper. And the way it *moves* – wait until you see the perfect plodding footsteps of a lumbering AT-AT or a gun turret exploding into tumbling, fiery fragments – is breathtaking.

But, happily, it's the way *Rogue Leader plays* that's benefited most from the magic hands of Factor 5. Whether you're aiming at TIE fighters over Tatooine, weaving to protect transport ships in the Ison trade corridor, or steering the Millennium Falcon (yep, Han Solo's faithful rustbucket *is* playable) through a terrifyingly dense asteroid field, *Rogue Leader* is never less than gripping. Even if Star Wars itself makes your eyelids sag, there's enough game here to keep your saliva glands bubbling over for weeks.

**It's as though the models used in the original films have somehow been injected into the disc.**

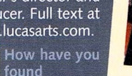
But for the 99.7 per cent of us for whom the films are religious experiences, it's the spot-on atmosphere that makes *Rogue Leader* so irresistible. The sights and sounds of George Lucas' universe as you tear around the sky will take you right back – just hearing the real voice of Wedge Antilles had our knees trembling.

And the best thing about *Rogue Leader*? It's out in the US. *Now*. If you've pockets deep enough for a US Gamecube – or own a US-compatible Japanese machine (see p13) – you could be playing it in as little as 24 hours. Excitement and adventure? A Jedi craves not these things? Rubbish. Go buy it. **NGC**

*Just like in the movies, most of those lasers inexplicably miss their target – you.*

## STAR WARS STARS

An online chat with Julian Eggebrecht and Brett Tosti, *Rogue Leader*'s director and producer. Full text at www.lucasarts.com.



**Q** How have you found working alongside The Big N?

**A** *For us the relationship was pretty much like a dream, because we had very early access to Gamecube. All members of the hardware and OS software team at Nintendo supported us all the way.*

**Q** How have you managed to pull off 60 frames per second so easily?

**A** *Maybe easily is the wrong word here. It was a constant challenge for the team. Gamecube makes it easier than previous consoles to actually achieve this goal, but as you can see with many other games, only very few actually do it in the end.*

**Q** *Rogue Leader*'s controls include two weapons buttons (blasters and secondary weapon), but how will vehicles like the B and Y-Wings (both with blasters, ion cannons, and other weapons) be dealt with?

**A** *The B-Wing has all these, so three weapons on one craft are possible. In addition, we have the different linked laser modes.*

**Q** What was your favourite meal while working on Rogue Leader?

**A** *It's a toss-up between Indian and cold pizza... and lots of drinks and things with caffeine in.*

**Q** What range of difficulty levels is there?

**A** *We are trying hard to make it easier in the beginning than the original Rogue Squadron, but then have a nice difficulty curve in the later levels and bonus missions. To achieve silver and gold medals should be a real challenge for the hardcore gamer.*



**Q** Is there any chance of being able to play as the Empire?

**A** *The attraction to the Dark Side is strong with this one...*






Where the Super Mario series is about exploring, young Sonic's adventures are usually a case of simply legging it around as quickly as possible.

# SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE

**Sega's spiky star speeds towards Gamecube!**

**INFO BURST**

**SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE**

| | |
|---|---|
| DEVELOPER: | Sega |
| PUBLISHER: | Sega |
| HOW MANY PLAYERS: | 1-4 |
| RUMBLE FUNCTION: | Yes |
| ONLINE PLAY: | No |
| NUMBER OF DISCS: | 1 |
| GBA LINK-UP: | Yes |

WHEN'S IT OUT?

| US | UK | Japan |
|---|---|---|
| TBA | TBA | 20 Dec |

ANTICIPATION RATING

So, Sonic's groundbreaking appearance on Nintendo's new machine gets a new word in its title – 'Battle'. And with good reason – because like *Super Monkey Ball*, *Sonic Adventure 2 Battle* will see the one-player game taking a back seat to a wealth of multiplayer riches.

A whopping seven different battle modes and 13 multiplayer characters are being crammed on to the disc by Sega as we write. The most basic is the straight Hi-Speed Race, but you'll also be treated to a Treasure Hunt starring Knuckles the Echidna and Rouge the Bat, a four-player shoot-out, and – incredibly – an entire *Mario Kart* clone. And we'll happily chomp on our caps if Sonic Team don't secrete at least two Gamecube-exclusive modes into the game.

Visitors to October's Tokyo Games Show were able to try such wonders first-hand – but there was something extra for hedgehog-lovers, too. *Sonic Adventure 2* is the first game to take advantage of the Gamecube-GBA link-up cable (due out in Japan on December 14th), and Sega used the event to show off the feature in action. You can breed teensy creatures called 'Chao' in the GBA version of *Sonic*, then pump them over to *Sonic Adventure 2* using the link cable and race them against each other for big prizes.

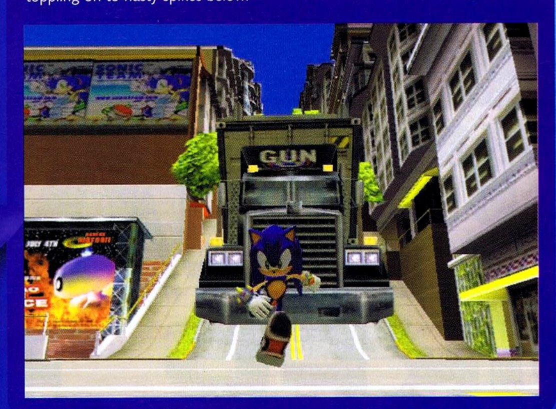
Among all these bonuses and extras, the single-player hasn't been

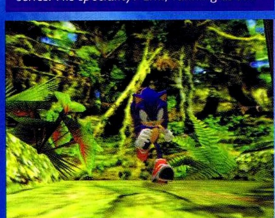
Lush forests hide many secret areas – but you'll have to look carefully to find them.



## RUN, HEDGEHOG, RUN!

*Sonic Adventure 2 Battle* is all about speed. Dawdling not only loses you precious points – your remaining time is converted into a score bonus at the end of each level – but also threatens a visit from the Reaper. That's partly because you're often being pursued by deadly objects, such as the articulated truck below. But you'll also need a head of speed to tackle some tricky obstacles, such as anorexic ramps and bounce pads, without toppling on to nasty spikes below.



Sonic's arch-nemesis, above, is new to the series. His speciality? Erm, running about.

*totally* forgotten. If you're used to Mario's sedate approach to platforms, prepare for a shock – Sonic tears through the beautiful landscapes as quickly as possible, using bounce pads, ramps and corkscrew loops to fly over obstacles and take impossible shortcuts. Set-pieces are two-a-penny, as the six playable characters – including Knuckles, Amy and new bad boy Shadow – are chased by runaway trucks and the like.

It's exciting stuff – but it's also fairly limited. Sega will be relying on that 'battle' aspect to sell the game to a group of gamers who've traditionally been at war with Sonic and his kind – we'll find out how successful they've been in a couple of months' time. NGC



## CHAO DOWN

Let's send Chao through the link cable for GBA game fun!



**1** First, find a suitable Chao. These lazy beggars are enjoying a snooze – time to boot them into action.



**2** Find the GBA station and wait for the little hatch to open. Then bung your struggling Chao inside. Ha!




**3** Opt to feed, move or – ominously – 'say goodbye' to your Chao. We want the top option – GBA link.




**4** You can plug GBAs into up to three GC joypad ports. We're sending our Chao (a running expert!) over to GBA 2.



**5** And look! There's our cuddly Chao larking about in GBA land. Enjoy yourself, little fella! Aw.








# ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

## FACT BLITZ

**1** You'll be able to choose from over 64 international teams, each with a selectable squad of up to 22 players.

**2** There are 13 stadiums to play in, featuring ultra-high detail, incredible architecture and crowd animation.

**3** *VS3* will boast superb weather effects, limited team management, multi-player modes and tournaments.

**4** Gamecube's extra power will allow for enhanced visuals, more detailed character models, and slicker animation.

## KILLER Q

**?** If it has no FIFA licence, will we be able to change the players' names, like in *ISS*?

**Oh yes, and a whole lot more besides. *Virtua Striker 3* will allow you to tinker with nearly every aspect of the beautiful game. There's even a create-a-player mode, which lets you put your team together *exactly* the way you want it – complete with real players' names if you so choose. Now you can't say fairer than that, can you?**

## NEW!

Exclusive to the Gamecube version will be an extra mode called 'Road to International Cup'. In this added single-player game you'll be able to take control of a country's national team for a period of four years, and develop their skills before the 'World Cup' itself. Sven Goran Eriksson eat your heart out!

## ANTICIPATION RATING

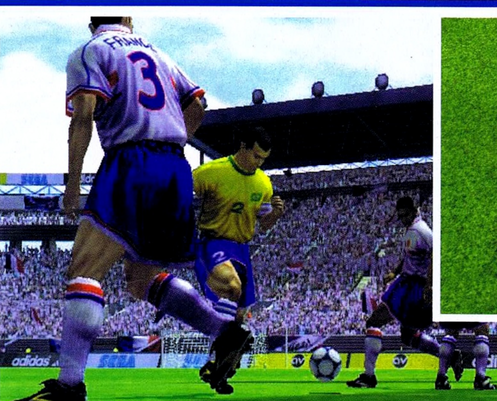



## WHEN'S IT OUT?






Spring Spring Spring



Notorious for its lack of depth, we're hoping Sega will make sufficient changes to satisfy the hardcore.




# VIRTUA STRIKER 3

### More 'shots' of Sega's beautiful game.

Let's face it, on the footy side of things Sega are going to have the Gamecube launch pretty much sewn up.

Their nearest competition so far is the utterly lamentable jerk-fest that is EA's *FIFA Soccer*. Okay, So *Virtua Striker 3* mightn't have the depth of play, or an official licence either, but in the visual stakes, it attacks EA's effort with a vicious two-footed studded tackle to the kneecaps. And this year's Spaceworld demonstration indicated that Sega have tweaked the controls to make the players far more responsive – in all fairness, this actually looks and plays better than the original arcade version. Not bad, eh?

So, unless things go horribly wrong, you're looking at a good, solid, footy sim (even if it is a tad simplified in terms of gameplay) that has all the hallmarks of a Sega coin-op – it's gorgeous, and it's damn good fun.




Hmm… The curve in this ball's trajectory would suggest foul play is at work.


It just keeps getting better and better. In this scene, water streams from above – very eerie indeed.

Plenty of care has been taken to ensure the zombies are more frightening than ever.

All backgrounds are fully animated, with stunning lighting and weather effects in abundance.

# RESIDENT EVIL BIOHAZARD

## *Thriller! Thriller re-write!*

This just looks better and better the more we see of it. If last month's press conference wasn't enough to get your juices flowing, then one quick glance at these newly released screenshots will be enough to give you a heart attack.

Pre-rendered they may be, but the painstaking detail in every new load of screens we get never cease to amaze us. Bear in mind also that these environments won't be static – there's a whole load of activity being taken in by every cinematic camera angle. Fires rage in the background, water trickles down stone steps, and lightning bursts illuminate the environment through gaps in the scenery, not to mention the weather effects in the mansion's surrounding environment.

*Resi*'s still slated for a March release in Japan, so Capcom have time to put the finishing touches to what already looks like one of the most atmospheric games ever. In the meantime, satisfy your lust for screenshots with these.



## ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

### FACT BLITZ

**1** Play as Jill Valentine or Chris Redfield. Choosing one or the other will alter the direction of the game, as well as items and weapons you can use.

**2** The environments are all animated and use new technology available to create special effects such as dynamic real-time lighting and reflections.

**3** Series creator Shinji Mikami is taking the helm for the remake. After a five-year break from the franchise, he looks set to work his magic again.

### NEW!



It's difficult to convey the sense of grandeur the remake has. Compared to the original, the locations are not just prettier, but substantially bigger and more elaborate too.

### RUMOURS

- The original PlayStation version of *Resident Evil* was supposedly inspired by George A Romero's zombie movie series Living Dead.
- The Gamecube re-make will feature some all-new scenes and events enriching the plot and furthering the intrigue behind the sinister Umbrella Corporation.

### KILLER Q

**?** So is this really going to be exactly like the first one? Why don't they make an all-new *Resi*?

**The developers wanted to revisit the first game because they felt they'd deviated from the original sense of horror. Now that they have the Gamecube hardware, they've realised they can create the atmosphere they always wanted, without the limitations of past machines. So, yes, the story will be the same – but we wouldn't put it past Capcom to throw in some surprises.**

### ANTICIPATION RATING






### WHEN'S IT OUT?


TBA

TBA

Mar

## ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

### FACT BLITZ

**1** 24 Smash Brothers to battle with, including ten secret fighters – each with their own distinct set of moves.

**2** Over 20 stunning landscapes, including Peach's Castle and the Great Bay from *Majora's Mask*.

**3** Single-player adventure mode with wave upon wave of classic Nintendo villains – Koopa Troopers included.

**4** Up to four players can play in straight battle, timed battle, puzzle, 'king of the ring' and many other modes.

### KILLER Q

**?** Okay, so *Super Smash Bros Melee* looks great – but how does it actually *play*?

**Fantastically. Fights are just as frenetic as their N64 counterparts, and with the addition of loads of new moves, power-ups and interactive slabs of scenery, this is undoubtedly GC's premier punch-'em-up.**

### NEW!

Unnerving us this month is the 'man and woman battle' mode – up to four players attempting to see off scores of neon-hued virtual folk. We're not sure whether it's the faceless hologram people themselves, or the fact that they're 'real' people looking oddly out-of-place in the cartoon Nintendo universe – but it scares us stupid.

### RUMOURS

- After Ganon's disfigured hand appeared in the *Smash Bros* FMV intro at E3, whispers of him being playable began. Sure enough, Link's nemesis *will* be under your control.
- Oh, and Jigglypuff and Luigi will also *definitely* be playable – although whether the star of *Luigi's Mansion* will be using his hoover nozzle in battle has yet to be seen.




### ANTICIPATION RATING

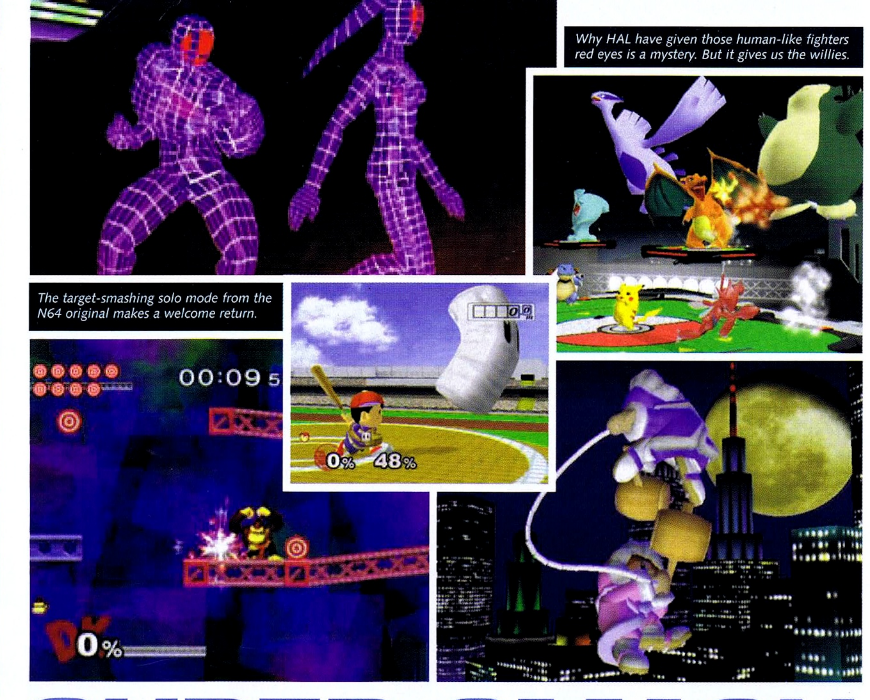


### WHEN'S IT OUT?


3 Dec


Spring


21 Nov




Why HAL have given those human-like fighters red eyes is a mystery. But it gives us the willies.

The target-smashing solo mode from the N64 original makes a welcome return.

# SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

## Plumbers vs princesses vs Pokémon vs polar climbers.

For a developer that usually keeps its mouth firmly zipped shut when it comes to future games, Nintendo are being remarkably open about *Super Smash Bros Melee*. We're currently on 168 screenshots lobbed out of Nintendo HQ, and we're still counting.

Still, you can see why they're so keen to share. *Smash Bros* isn't just the sequel to an N64 classic – and one of the world's greatest fighters – it's also a visual feast of render-quality Nintendo characters, gargantuan arenas and landscapes and some room-blazing special effects. And if you're the happy owner of the video we gave away with **NGC**/60, you'll know just how *fast* it is, making for bewilderingly chaotic battling – especially with four players.

Developers HAL are packing in a crazy number of extra modes and minigames for the benefit of friendless loners – take a peek at the Home Run mode and the bizarre Survival game in these new screens. We'll be giving *every* mode a thorough going over in our huge import review soon.



These washed-out shots shouldn't reflect the quality of the final game.

Is this the vat of acid responsible for the Joker's disfigured features?

# BATMAN VENGEANCE

## Here comes the man in black.

Oh, our aching brains. See, this *Batman* isn't Kemco's Gamecube-only *Batman* – it's Ubi Soft's *Batman*, a GC port of the PS2 *Batman* based on the TV Batman. Gnnn.

Due out just after Gamecube's US launch, *Batman Vengeance* refers to itself vaguely as an 'action-adventure'. In-game, that translates as a bit of exploring, a smidge of puzzle-solving, and a giant dollop of punching, kicking and chucking your Batarang all over the shop – all captured in the sinister, stylised look of the animated series. In fact, *Batman*'s moody visuals are the game's most impressive feature, especially when you learn they've been crafted by the same team behind – get this – *Rayman 2*.

Ubi Soft are keen to bring Gamecube owners a movie-like experience, mixing up cut-scenes and a pot pourri of action sequences to get adrenaline squirting out of your ears. Whether that'll be enough to help *Batman Vengeance* win the battle of the *Batmans*, though, remains to be seen.

The Batarang, on the left, can be aimed and thrown in first-person. Dead handy.

The look of the creepy cartoon series has been beautifully captured. Top work, Ubi Soft.

## ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

### FACT BLITZ

**1** Wander around on foot *and* hop into the Batmobile and Batplane for fast-paced driving and flying sequences.

**2** The full contents of Batman's utility belt are at your disposal, including the Batarang and the Bat Scope.

**3** Guest appearances from characters including Batgirl, Alfred, Poison Ivy and – of course – The Joker.

**4** An improved frame rate and a heap of visual tweaks promised for the Gamecube version.

### NEW!



***Batman* was originally to use real-time cut-scenes and music that changed to reflect the mood – the PS2 didn't have the oomph to cope, but Gamecube's huge onboard memory does. Yay!**

### RUMOURS

Our sonar radar has picked up rumours that you'll be playing as Bruce Wayne rather than Batman in certain levels – and they're all true.

There's an invisibility option that becomes available the first time you finish the game, allowing you to wander levels and examine bad guys without being seen, à la *GoldenEye*.

### KILLER Q

? Is the TV show's raft of voice talent involved in *Batman Vengeance*?

**Yep. The producer of *Batman Vengeance*, Reid Schneider, has revealed that the entire gang of voice artists from the animated TV series has been dragged into Ubi Soft's sound studios to record exclusive speech for the game's many cut-scenes – and that cast list includes none other than Mark Hamill as the voice of The Joker. Wick.**

### ANTICIPATION RATING





### WHEN'S IT OUT?






| US | UK | Japan |
|---|---|---|
| 27 Nov | TBA | TBA |

# SGT CRUISE

## A real dressing down's in store for this soldier.

### ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

### FACT BLITZ

**1** 30 levels of mindless top-down blasting on land, sea and air, in the style of classics such as *Ikari Warriors*.

**2** Variable weather and eye-blistering special effects as enemies and scenery explode around you.

**3** Hijack futuristic vehicles, *Grand Theft Auto*-style, for bizarre racing sub-games and 'sabotage raids'.

### NEW!

**After arguments over whether these screenshots are from the PC, Xbox or Gamecube version of the game, Titus have assured us it's *definitely* the latter. So feast your eyes on the screen-shuddering explosions, neat cartoonesque visuals and pink-and-white bloomers – and prepare yourself for our playtest in a few issues' time.**

### ANTICIPATION RATING





### WHEN'S IT OUT?





2002 TBA TBA

It's been ages since we last saw a videogame star wearing only their underpants. So, hurrah for Sgt Cruise, who joins Arthur from *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* and Rare's infamous Mr Pants on the 'brief' (ha!) list of half-dressed heroes.

The reason for the Sergeant's near-nudity? He's had his clothes stolen by aliens – and his mission in *Sgt Cruise* is not only to blast the extra-terrestrial thieves back to where they came from, but also to locate his missing hosiery.

In fact, there's more to Sarge Cruise's stolen outfit than a pair of corduroys and a nice warm jumper – there are add-on guns, biosuits and cyborg tank parts for the beefy bloke to strap on, allowing his arsenal to match the increasingly tough waves of aliens that stream onto the screen.

*Sgt Cruise* isn't due 'til early next year, but its non-stop retro blast-'em-up action should keep violence-minded GC owners more than happy when it does.

Anyone out there remember Ikari Warriors? Sgt Cruise draws from its violent style.







Hooray – he's found his trews. Now he needs something to cover up his chest.

# UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

## Movies, games and Woody Woodpecker.

### ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

### FACT BLITZ

**1** Explore the studios with Woody Woodpecker and jump on rides based on blockbusting Hollywood movies.

**2** There are over 500 movie trivia questions, including tricky posers as "What kind of animal is Babe?".

**3** Gorgeous FMV cut-scenes, stunning orchestral scores, and an annoying woodpecker – sucked right off the disc.

### KILLER Q

**?** What exactly is the *point* of all the theme park-related frippery in *Universal Studios*?

**For every ride you go on, question you answer and puzzle you solve, you get a stamp, enabling you to access new areas and rides. *Universal Studios* is definitely a 'younger person's game'.**

### ANTICIPATION RATING





### WHEN'S IT OUT?





18 Nov Spring 7 Dec

Race through time in a modified DeLorean! Take part in a Wild West shoot-out! Throw barrels at bloodthirsty sharks! In short, live your dreams in the world's most exciting theme park!

Sadly, *Universal Studios* isn't *quite* as breathtaking as that. Strip away the fairly fancy visuals and theme park, er, theme, and you're looking at little more than a series of minigames, all designed with the kids in mind. Which means the cowboy gunfight is actually a *Time Crisis*-style on-rails shooter – complete with pop-up wooden targets. And the Back To The Future race is merely a drive along a mostly straight track – against just one brainless CPU-controlled competitor.

Yep, it's encouraging to see scenes from classic movies like Jaws, Jurassic Park and E.T. resurrected on Gamecube – we just don't rate their life expectancy too highly. We'll see…




Just look at the visual quality! We're sure it'll play brilliantly, though. We hope.






The least-loved cartoon character in history is your host for the game.


ADVANCED FUN!
WWF ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA
SCOOBY-DOO and the CYBER CHASE
DISNEY'S ATLANTIS THE LOST EMPIRE
TETRIS WORLDS
GAME BOY ADVANCE
Also available from THQ...
POWER RANGERS TIME FORCE
Rugrats Castle Capers
www.gclub.net www.thq.com
THQ
NINTENDO ®, GAME BOY™, GAME BOY ADVANCE™ AND ARE TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO CO. LTD.

# NGC MAGAZINE ARENA

## HOW NGC SCORES A GAME

NGC has one of the toughest scoring systems around. We won't award our Star Game accolade until we're sure you're getting your money's worth.

**85 and above** — *Only after playing a game to the end will we consider awarding it our Star Game seal.*

**84–70** — *If we award a game more than 70 you can be certain it's fantastic, if flawed, fun.*

**69–50** — *Every so often a game comes along that's perfectly playable, but just not special in any way.*

**49–20** — *Here you'll find games that were lazily programmed or hurriedly cobbled together – or simply bad ideas.*

**19–0** — *The disaster zone. There have been a couple and we've not shied away from giving them a firm kicking.*

## TEAM GC

This month: Paul persuaded us to trundle down a half-pipe on a sofa. Witness the horror.

**JUD WEBB** What's he laughing about, eh, readers? Is it something to do with what Mark's other hand is up to?

**MARK GREEN** "Mummy!" cried Greener as we took to the skies. "Will I ever see my beloved Tina again?" Well, no.

**ALAN MADDRELL** Alan decided to do his shepherd's pie impression – flaky on top, pure mince underneath.

**GERAINT EVANS** The ladies love it when the little Welshman shows his hairy pits. Well, they swoon…

**TIM WEAVER** The Weavernator took the chance to headbutt several of Jud's teeth out. "That'll learn 'im to be late," he scowled.

**DAN GEARY** Recent arrival Dan cemented his relationship with Mark by gouging Greener's eyes out. He'll be out of hospital soon.

**PAUL EDWARDS** For such a wizened surfer, Paul has surprisingly pasty legs. Just like two unbaked sausage rolls.




# TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

All the fun of the skate park – except without the scabby knees and the fools in baggy jeans and beanies…

GO TO PAGE 38

**YOU** *Your chosen character. Naturally you'll want to keep an eye on this fella to gauge whether or not you have enough time to squeeze in an extra trick.*

**SCORE** *The higher this gets the more cash you'll earn. And the more cash you earn, the more you can spend on your skater and open up new levels.*

**RAMPS** *If you need to catch some serious air with as little hassle as possible, these are what you need. If they're pointing at another scoring area, all the better.*

**SPECIAL BAR** *The more high-scoring tricks you pull off the higher the meter gets. By filling the bar up you can perform one of your character's high-scoring special moves. Yep.*

**RAILS** *The mainstay of any super-high score. Tricks are easier to link together if you have plenty of these around to traverse the park with.*

**TRICKS** *This shows exactly what trick you're pulling off and how many points each one is worth.*

# TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

***The Hawkster rides in for his final trick on N64.***

*INFO BURST*

**TONY HAWK'S 2**

| | |
|---|---|
| DEVELOPER: | O2 |
| PUBLISHER: | Activision |
| PLAYERS: | 1-2 |
| CONTROLLER PAK: | Yes |
| CART SAVE: | No |
| PASSWORD SAVE: | No |
| EXPANSION PAK | Yes |
| RUMBLE PAK: | No |
| TRANSFER PAK: | No |

**WHEN'S IT OUT?**

| US | UK | Japan |
|---|---|---|
| Now | Now | TBA |

**COST: £50**

# ON THE LEVEL

One of the best things about *Tony Hawk's 2* is the variety of areas to skate around. Each new level presents you with fresh opportunities to show off your skills – so an intimate knowledge of each park is essential to your success.



**THE HANGAR**
*Just like in the first game, you'll start off inside a warehouse-type building, complete with secret areas, and loads of high ramps and rails to let you to get the hang of things. Try grinding over the Helicopter's blades for a sweet surprise.*

**SCHOOL**
*A Tony Hawk's game just wouldn't be the same if you couldn't rip it up through the school yard. With its low railings and benches, this a great park to practise your grinding skills in. Just watch out for the high-speed roving golf cart.*



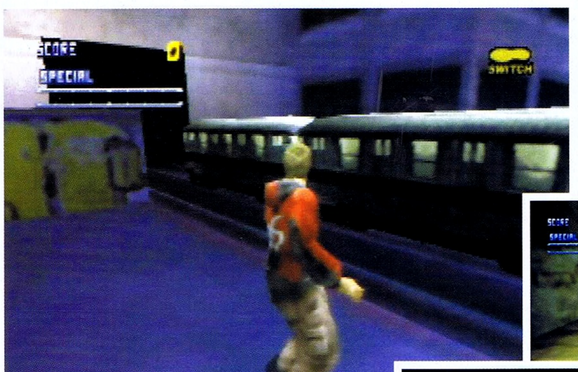
**MARSEILLES**
*Your first competition. You have three heats – all one minute long – in order to prove your worth. The higher your standing, the more cash you get. This one's quite a balanced park, with plenty of bowls, ramps, and secrets to maximise your score.*



**NEW YORK**
*One of our favourites, this one. Expect plenty of kerbs and walls to grind off and some huge jumps allowing for plenty of mid-air combos. Collect enough subway tokens and you'll even get to ride the subway rails. Risky.*



**THE BEACH**
*Sleeping tramps and spraycans are the 'collectables' on this course. One of the highest-scoring parks, there are loads of ramps and different levels to work with. It does feel pretty claustrophobic, though.*




*It's worth scouring the surrounding area for any sign of anomalies. If you spot one, chances are secrets lie within.*

*It's been hard making the transition from Gamecube to N64 this month. But however much Tony Hawk's visuals pale in comparison, five minutes into Activision's final 64-bit release, such thoughts are long gone.*

You should all know the drill by now. Choose from a handful of your favourite skaters – each with their various strengths and weaknesses – and guide them around parks, cities, warehouses and schoolyards on an expensive wheeled plank. Just like in the real world, dotted around each area are floating day-glo letters that spell out words, handily rounded curves and inclines to pull tricks off, and around $500 in cash suspended in tantalisingly tricky-to-reach places. By pulling off more elaborate stunts and jumping through some of the aforementioned goodies, you'll earn a massive wad of notes and the chance to open up a new area to terrorise. What's even better is that there's *no* chance of grouchy elderly residents grassing you up to the police and the council won't come and put metal nobbles and spikes all over your favourite grinding ledges.

Yup, that get-down arthritis-dodger Mr Hawk is back once again. This time he's boasting a host of new scabby-kneed mates, an even bigger repertoire of trickery, a fully functional park editor and that all-important multi-player mode. So things, you could say, are looking good. Or they would be if it weren't for the fact that, despite *Tony Hawk's'* fangled expansion pak exploitation, it actually looks like the back end of a bus.

## Growing old disgracefully

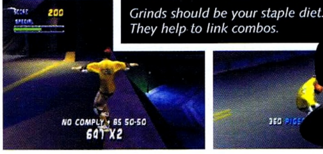
Considering this is actually the last N64 game to be released, the amount of pop-up is nothing short of exceptional. We're not quite sure how developers Edge of Reality have achieved it, but they've managed to accurately mimic faults we were finding in games almost five years ago – amazing stuff. As you skate around each new area, you'll notice huge buildings magically appearing out of nothingness. Trees, mounds, rails – anything – you name it, EOR can conjure it up out of thin air and place it about five metres away from your face. So we're

# ROUGH RIDING



*If you've played the first Tony, expect much, much more of the same – only better. Here's a little montage we prepared earlier...*




*Grinds should be your staple diet. They help to link combos.*







## GET CREATIVE

*Tony Hawk's 2 lets you edit pretty much any aspect of the game. Whether it's your board, your own character, the tricks or the actual parks, there's enough in here to keep you editing well into 2002.*



1 First up, you'll want to create your own likeness in full polygonal glory. You select skin tone, hair colour, shirt – even the make and colour of your shoes!



2 Unfortunately, your skills will leave much to be desired. You can't just become a pro overnight, so you'll have to earn the right to increase your stats.



3 The best feature of TH2 is the opportunity to design your own skate park. With so many different rails, fun boxes and ramps to choose from, it can be a daunting task.



4 Once you've got everything all laid down, you can head off for a test run before going back to the editor to change anything you might have found wrong with it.



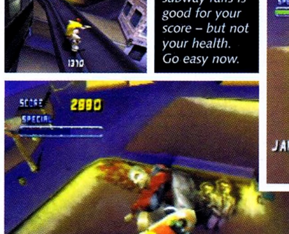
5 Once you've settled on your finished article, give it a test run once more before saving it. We found the home-made courses were best played in multiplayer on the 'Horse' game.



6 There's nothing better than watching one of your mates stack it into a whopping great pit full of spikes after an eight-foot drop off a particularly nasty rail. Priceless.




*Landing in this position will ensure you never have children – ever.*




*Grinding the subway rails is good for your score – but not your health. Go easy now.*

JAPAN AIR • BODY VARIAL • KICKFLIP TO INDY
1315 X3

*If you keep doing the same move over and over again, its value will depreciate by half each time – so try to mix 'em up by busting some fresh tricks.*

*The pop-up on some of the levels is ridiculous. Very shoddy.*

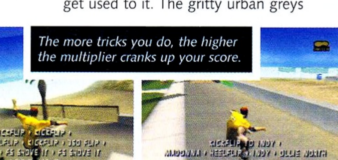


ever so slightly disappointed in this respect. You'd think EOR could at least demonstrate some semblance of technical prowess for their last N64 endeavour, but evidently, they couldn't be bothered. Thankfully though, it's not all doom and gloom, and despite the ugly pop-up, it isn't so bad once you get used to it. The gritty urban greys and browns mightn't make your eyes burst out of your skull, but the skaters themselves move very fluidly, with multiple frames of animation that make pulling off some of the more flamboyant moves a joy to behold. So while Edge of Reality haven't exactly gone to town on the backdrops and detail of the parks themselves, they have focused their efforts on the most important aspect of the game – namely, the skater you control and the immediate environment that he or she is interacting with. Which, obviously, is what *Tony Hawk's* is all about.

### Bump 'n' grind

*Tony Hawk's* is superb in just about every other area. Tackle the skate parks first, and you'll find their construction to be just as well executed as you'd hope. Each and every new area opened presents a genuinely new experience. Skating about and familiarising yourself with the nooks and crannies and seeking out any kerbs, rails, gaps and inclines for potential high-scoring trick combos is just as compulsive as its predecessor. Each course is also littered with secrets and bonuses, some obvious and others that can only be opened and accessed by collecting the requisite number of pick-ups and performing sufficiently daring gravity-defying feats to find them. Quite simply hours of fun can be had on each and every park attempting to fulfil all the cash-making criteria you're presented with at the beginning of every level. Once you've managed to score enough dough, or earned the desired medal in the competitions, it's off to another level for even more high-flying insanity.

So with the gameplay mechanics of every other *Hawk's* incarnation fully realised and in place, it'll be no surprise to hear that *TH2* is another fantastic game. If you've never been fortunate



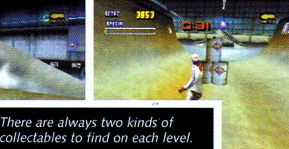
*The more tricks you do, the higher the multiplier cranks up your score.*









*There are always two kinds of collectables to find on each level.*

## SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP

The further you progress through the game, the more cash you'll accumulate. These bucks are needed to unlock the various levels in the game, but you can also spend them upgrading your character by buying new tricks. You can also make changes to your board by investing in new kit, and while initially it may seem to make little difference, it does give you much more scope for increasing your scores by helping you spend more time in the air and giving you that extra speed you need to chain tricks together. At the end of the day, the more trick potential you have, the more chance you get to line your pockets with excess cash. Lovely.

Competition trials can be tough. Make sure you make the best of what little time you have to impress the judges.

Finding secrets allows you to pick up loads of cash to help progress.

### THE SCORE

Before you start each and every new area, you'll need to see where all your future buckage is going to be flowing from. Most of the points you get come from racking up a monster score, but some require you to hunt down special items and letters to complete each level's scoring criteria.

enough to play *Tony 1*, the degree of depth and the sheer amount of tricks to learn is staggering. Each rider has a variety of basics to master, all of which can be linked and chained into each other to send your scores through the stratosphere. The level of pleasure you get from linking stunt to stunt and grind to grind is immense – especially if you actually manage to land successfully, which is no mean feat. *TH* is one of those games that you can just keep playing almost indefinitely, as the potential to keep bettering your own personal high score is very much open-ended and is accountable only to your own level of personal skill. It's in this particular aspect that *Tony 2* excels in its longevity.

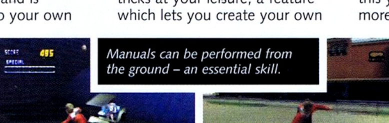
### Right on (and on and on)

Whether you're doomed to a lonely single-player state, or a charismatic mate-magnet, *Tony Hawk's* is well worthy of a place in your collection. The reason being that there are so many modes, multi-player games and features that could easily have you seeing less and less daylight as time goes on. On top of the fully accomplished single-player career mode, there's a free-skate option that allows you to practise tricks at your leisure, a feature which lets you create your own skater, a highly addictive multi-player with five different games to play, and the *pièce de résistance* – a fully functional park editor that allows you to bring to life the most ridiculous skating arenas floating around in your imagination. If you want a spiralling rail rising out of a bowl and descending into a half-pipe topped with spiked pits, you've got it – if you have the time and paience to sit there and build the thing.

Needless to say, then, you're going to have your work cut out if you want to sample everything this yellow cart has to offer, but more to the point you'll have a great deal of enjoyment while you're doing it. The multi-player itself is enough to keep you going through those short winter days when it's too chilly outside for the real thing, and combined with the track editor, you'll be in your element, swapping, building and skating on your own – and your mates' – specially designed parks.

Despite being something of an ugly duckling, and hardly the big-bang exit we'd hoped for the N64, *Tony Hawk's* proves itself to be fairly indicative of the console's catalogue as a whole – a host to some seriously entertaining gaming.

**GERAINT EVANS**







Manuals can be performed from the ground – an essential skill.

### TONY HAWK'S 2



- Bucketloads of character and appeal
- Takes ages to master
- Excellent multiplayer
- Easy-to-use skate park editor



- Disgraceful pop-up
- Can be frustrating
- You'll never see sunlight again

**IF YOU LIKE THIS...**

**1080° Snowboarding**
Nintendo
NGC/21 89%
Another tray-based extreme sports title – but with snow.





**7 VISUALS**
The animation's fantastic, but it's let down by earthy colours and hideous pop-up.



**7 SOUNDS**
Okay. Suitably funky tunes interspersed with the sounds of crowds, bells and sirens.

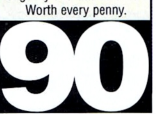


**6 MASTERY**
Hmm... Laughable. There's plenty in there, but it could have been a little slicker.



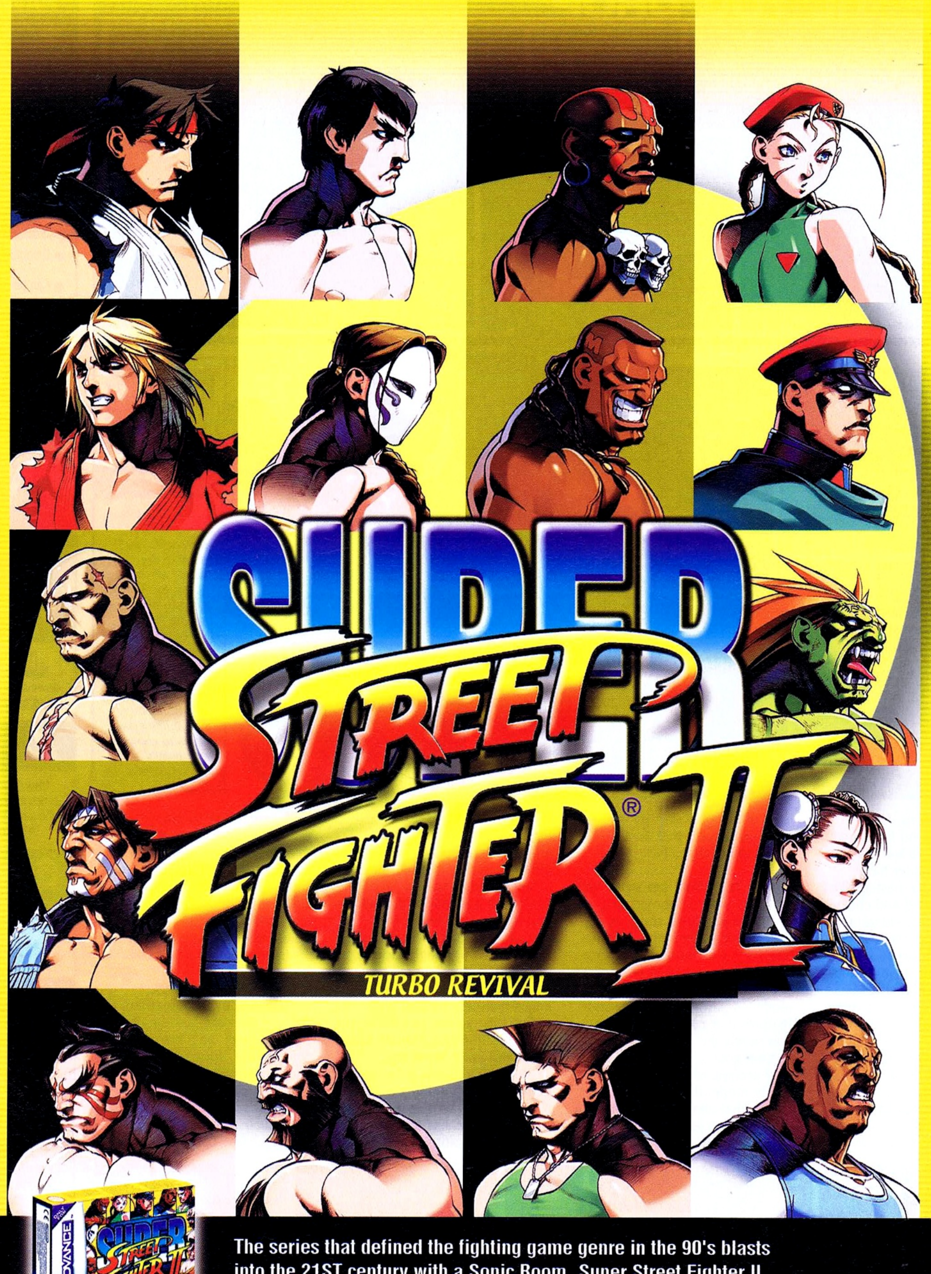
**9 LIFESPAN**
Massive single-player, hilarious multiplayer and character and park editors. Brilliant.

**VERDICT**
A superbly engrossing title offering loads of depth, longevity and oodles of fun. Worth every penny.



**90**

**THE COMBO-KICKING CAST OF CAPCOM'S STREET FIGHTER II MUSCLES ITS WAY ONTO GBA WITH SUPER STREET FIGHTER II TURBO REVIVAL !**




The series that defined the fighting game genre in the 90's blasts into the 21ST century with a Sonic Boom. Super Street Fighter II Turbo Revival for Game Boy™ advance features 16 SF II Fighters in tournament and head-to-head linked play. It's got all of the special attacks and a control scheme custom-made for the GBA.

NGC presents planet

# GAME BOY

NEWS, REVIEWS, TIPS FOR YOUR GAME BOY COLOR, ADVANCE, POCKET, CAMERA AND PRINTER





# WARIO LAND 4

## THE FAT ONE RETURNS FOR ANOTHER STUNNER

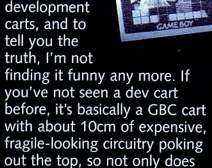
## PLUS

- *Doom* and *Ecks vs Sever* in our two-page duel.
- The GBA's first ever RTS! *Mech Platoon* reviewed.
- All the newest tips for your handheld favourites.
- Latest news and previews of the biggest games.



# Welcome to Planet Game Boy

See the fury in my eyes?! No sooner do Woolies start flinging up their gaudy – and frankly repulsive – Christmas decorations, the games start flowing through the office like nobody's business. It's even reached the point where the bottom drawer of my desk is stuffed to the gunnels with publisher's development carts, and to tell you the truth, I'm not finding it funny any more. If you've not seen a dev cart before, it's basically a GBC cart with about 10cm of expensive, fragile-looking circuitry poking out the top, so not only does playing them on a GBA make you look like a right berk, but they're so chunky that I'm fast running of room…



Anyway, I digress. The real reason I'm not particularly amused is the fact that the amount of gaming travesties I've sampled this month is staggering. Quite what's going on I don't know *(Er, Christmas? – Tim)*, but there are a number of publishers and developers that would do well to save the cost of the carts and development time of four stinkers and invest money in a couple of decent games instead.

Finally, there's the matter of *Tetris Worlds*. I simply cannot understand what happened there. How anyone can fail to put a high-score table in this, of all games, beggars belief, and turns what should have been a masterpiece into worthless cack.

Thankfully, it's not all bad. Nintendo, Kemco, BAM! and Activision have saved Chrimble with some pleasant hand-warmers. A heartfelt Merry Christmas to you and them.

**Geraint Evans, Editor**

planet GAME BOY

Planet Game Boy, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW

**Christmas 2001**

Editor: Geraint Evans

Contributors: Mark Green, Alan Maddrell, Dan Geary, Paul Edwards, Adriana Owens

# THQ AND SEGA TEAM UP

Announced this month in the US was Sega's decision to team up with THQ. It's their intention to co-publish up to 16 titles for Game Boy Advance.

Six of the games will be developed by Sega alone, while the remaining ten will be a collaboration of both companies' development teams. Among the games announced so far are updated versions of Sega's own hyper-addictive puzzlers *Puyo Pop* and *Columns Crown*, *House of the Dead Pinball* and *Sonic Advance*. However, the one that really got us excited was Sega's *Smash Pack* – a carefully selected collection of their old Mega Drive classics. Hopefully, the inclusion of some of the titles from their Dreamcast disc, such as sprawling RPG *Phantasy Star II*, *Streets of Rage 2* and the original *Sonic*, will satisfy Geraint, who's currently shrieking and flailing around like a big girl in anticipation.

There is, as yet, no word from THQ's UK headquarters as to whether the joint venture will take effect in Europe, but either way the games should begin surfacing over here some time next year.

THQ






New backgrounds, all new characters and 10,000 in cash. Nice.

# RETRO FIGHTER RETURNS

For fans of the much-loved *International Karate +*, this will be music to your ears. Just before we went to print, we caught wind that Studio 3 would be bringing the basic-yet-compelling beat-'em-up to GBA.

Unlike the competent GBC version, this new version will have up to 26 characters, improved background artwork and that all-important three-player mode. Furthermore, there will also be a high-score table for you to enter into. Even better, once the closing date passes, the UK's most proficient fighter will win themselves a whopping £10,000. We'll share the details with you next month once we have them.



Thankfully, the GBA version will also support a three-player mode.



A classic in the Amiga/ST days – but whether IK+ will stand up in 2001 is another matter.

# LIMITED EDITION CRAZY

It isn't fair. While we're stuck with our meagre choice of GBA colours, our friends in the east are having limited edition GBA's thrown at them like there's no tomorrow. Not content with their sparkly Suicune and Celebi Pokémon Advances, they're now being treated to three all-new colours too.

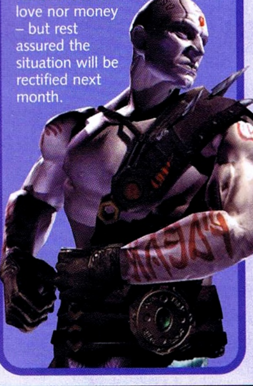
Labelled Midnight Blue, Orange and Milky Blue – which looks identical to our 'Arctic Blue' – they've been selling like hot cakes ever since they hit the shelves. In addition to these, it's also been announced that a shiny new silver GBA will be out in December. If you want to pick one up it'll only set you back ¥9800 (£55) – plus import costs of course.

Still, as GBA's popularity continues to blossom over here, expect a host of new designs to make their way to Blighty in the new year. Huzzah!

## POCKET KOMBAT

The GBA looks set to become the favoured home of the 2D fighter right now, with more and more classic scrappers making the journey to the small screen.

This month's new challenger comes in the shape of Midway's infamous digitised gore-fest *Mortal Kombat*. Imaginatively titled *Mortal Kombat Advance*, it's actually a port of *MK3* which was, in many people's opinion, the best of the lot – especially on the SNES. Unfortunately, we couldn't track down screenshots for love nor money – but rest assured the situation will be rectified next month.





Just check out these shots. If it moves as well as it looks then we're in for a treat.

# POLYGON-BASED SHOOTER HITS ADVANCE!

Going by the name of *Star Fight*, this is far and away one of the most impressive games we've seen on Game Boy Advance.

Taking its cue from the SNES' *Star Fox*, it uses polygons to create lush, multi-coloured 3D visuals. Despite lacking the traditionally necessary hardware, Graphic State Games is already squeezing out every last drop of power from the GBA to bring us superbly detailed gaming environments and a super-smooth frame rate.

Details on how the game actually plays are still pretty scarce, and we still can't figure out if the action will be on rails or in a 'free-roaming' environment, but either way, with its bold colours and complicated geometry, *Star Fight* is shaping up to be nothing short of spectacular.

There's still no news of a publisher yet either, so we have no idea when it will finally emerge, but rumour has it that it should be coming our way in early 2002. In the meantime, check out these lovely new screenshots and try not to get too excited. We did, and there wasn't a loo around for miles!

Just imagine it. 3D blasting in the palm of your hand.



Fingers crossed for a publisher, folks – or we may never see this beauty.

# SHINING FORCE FOR GBA

If you're a dedicated RPG fanatic, then this will come as a very welcome surprise indeed. At this month's Tokyo Game Show, Sega announced that they were bringing the next instalment of their brilliant *Shining Force* RPG series to Game Boy Advance.

Designed by Yoshitaka Tamaki – one of the members of the original team behind *Shining in the Darkness* and *Shining Force* for the Mega Drive – it will take on an isometric viewpoint and retain the familiarly cute anime styling. You can also expect the same blend of battling, chatting, character building and treasure hunting that made the previous games so adored.

In addition to this, there'll be the chance to choose from up to four different character classes – magician, warrior, berserker and elven archer – and you'll also be able to design the look of your chosen hero before you start the game. As if this wasn't enough, you'll also be able to link up to four GBAs via a link cable, for simultaneous adventuring. You can expect this little beauty to appear early next year. We can't wait.




The Shining Force series has always been a success among the Sega-loving massive…

## YOUR ULTIMATE BUYING GUIDE







A simply fantastic game, and an essential purchase.




Well worth a look – this is an excellent title.




Some problems, but almost certainly good fun.




Flawed. Probably not worth bothering with.




Utterly lamentable. Avoid like the plague.




This is the first boss. Unsurprisingly it's dead easy.




Once you've got the key-bird to follow you, you'll need to make a dash for the exit.

# WARIO LAND 4

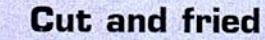
**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** Nintendo **Price:** £35
**Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1 **Out:** Now

Transforming Wario is not only amusing, but essential to your ongoing progress.

As you'd expect, all the levels have their own theme, with some wonderfully varied environments

In the absence of an original *Mario* game on GBA (and the realisation we aren't going to be getting one any time soon) it's left to Mario's obese gem-guzzling nemesis, Wario, to take up the challenge and stamp Nintendo's platforming authority on the mediocre efforts that are currently doing the rounds.

Judging by Wario's superb past outings on GBC, it's unsurprising that *Wario Land 4* steams in to the head of the pack as GBA's premier pleasurable platformer. Nintendo are, and always will be, the best when it comes to 2D jump-and-collect marathons – and *Wario Land 4* proves this once again, with a game that simply oozes sheer quality from every pore.



### Cut and fried

First up are a series of gorgeous cut-scenes and mid-level interludes which show off GBA's nifty 2D capabilities. These range from the opening scenes, where the spiky-moustached fatty heads off on his travels in search of treasure, to brief in-game breaks where Wario tumbles down '60s-style psychedelic portals – all to the sound of another infectious Nintendo soundtrack. The deliciously colourful presentation is consistent through the entire adventure, making playing *Wario 4* a joy – and thanks to the crisp visuals, it's all visible even in the poorest lighting conditions.




No one makes plaformers like Nintendo – and they've proved it again. Top stuff.

### On the level

As for the game itself, it's another case of running, jumping and collecting. But that said, Nintendo have managed to keep the formula nice and fresh through the addition of some neat features. Wario himself has a massive range of manoeuvres at his disposal – like bashing,




Collect enough cash and you can buy some great little minigames.



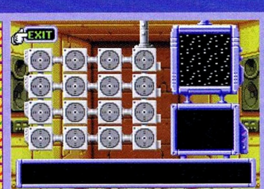
With quite a strict time restriction, things can get pretty sweaty at times.



## CARRY ON COLLECTING







**1** There's absolutely loads of stuff for Wario to seek out on his adventure. In order to fully complete each level, you'll need to find all four quarters of a special gem. When they're brought together, they'll open a door that takes you to the next section of the game.

**2** For the high-score junkies among you, there are various rooms littered throughout each level which hold giant crystals, which are always just out of reach. By using your noggin' and the enemies in your vicinity, there's a way to reach them… somehow.

**3** Once each level, you'll also find – or not as the case may be – one of Wario's hidden CDs. Collect them all and you'll have access to a variety of tracks for the game's central hub, ranging from pimp-tastic '70s funk to eerie ambient sounds. Nice one.

This is the central hub of the game where you start off.



## FLEXIBLE FRIEND

Actually, he's not that flexible. He's a right old fatty who'd probably break into a sweat at the mere thought of limbering up for the splits. Still, when faced with the right enemy, Wario can suffer all kinds of deformities which, for a brief period of time, give him some interesting attributes.





**1** Get spiked by one of these bees and you'll inflate, allowing you to float upwards. Take care not to hit anything though, or you'll plummet groundwards.

**2** Swallow some enemy projectiles and Wario will become even fatter than usual, allowing you to smash through to new areas using only his gut. Nice.





**3** Getting hit by this skeleton's power will transform Wario into a zombie. Jumping in this state enables you to fall through the floors, for some reason.

**4** You can even transform yourself into a bat, by getting bitten by one of the flying rodents on this level. Just make sure you don't fly into candles.

stomping, throwing and running, all accessed through combinations of GBA's four buttons.

Every level has also been cunningly designed to ensure that you exercise each ability to the full. From the inspired first-level tutorial to the thumb-numbing difficulty of the latter stages, Nintendo have pitched the learning curve to perfection, making sure you're always challenged and, more importantly, excited about tackling each new area. There's also a great *Sabrewulf*-style twist to the levels. Once you've worked your way through each level, you'll have to access the exit portal button and collect a key. With that done, a timer kicks in, forcing you to race your way back through the level before it shuts down for good.

### The fourth dimension

This adds a whole new dimension to the experience, as you sweat in a desperate attempt to leg it to the exit with your new-found booty. To top it all off, *Wario 4* is littered with cunning puzzles, while certain sections of the game require Wario to morph into various guises and use new powers to achieve certain goals. In one instance, you're unable to progress further unless you intentionally get stung by one of the game's airborne enemies, causing Wario to puff up like a balloon, allowing him to float upwards. These little changes to Wario serve to keep you both surprised and genuinely amused throughout your adventure.

### Perfectly platformed

As for failings, *Wario Land 4* doesn't have many – other than its overall difficulty level. There are more than enough reasons to revisit completed levels – with all manner of collectables, high-score beating opportunities and enjoyable minigames on offer, you'll still be motivated to stick the *Wario Land 4* cart back in your Game Boy Advance for quite a few months to come.

Suffice to say, we really can't recommend *Wario 4* enough. It's far and away the best platformer currently available on GBA and is an essential and worthy addition to your collection. Get it in.

5






*Punching cacodemons: Not a good idea at all.*



*Now that's just disgusting. He might have a bad cold, but flinging snot everywhere only spreads the lurgie.*







*Hello imps! Ah, happy days... This really is a spot-on conversion. Brilliant.*

# DOOM



**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** Activision **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1-4 **Single-cart link:** No **Out:** Now

If ever there was a game that needed no introduction, this is it. It's difficult to imagine anyone who's never played the PC classic *Doom* – let alone anyone who's never even *heard* of it. *Doom* is, without a doubt, a member of that elite clan that can lay claim to being the most influential pieces of gaming software in the world. Just as *Mario* helped to define the platforming genre, *Doom* helped shape the massive influx of shooters on every platform under the sun, not just the PC. So to say we're extremely excited about its appearance on Nintendo's handheld is something of an understatement.

*Doom*'s premise is simple. You're an ultra-tough space marine with one thing on your mind – the demise of every godforsaken, bloodthirsty mutant-demon on the planet. Once your lust for death has been suitably satisfied, you have to make it to the exit before moving on to the next scum-infested stage. Sounds simple, and in some ways, it is. All you have to do is leg it around each level, flipping switches and shooting everything that moves in the face. Trouble is, the enemies are so relentless, so aggressive and so... well, numerous, that on later stages you'll have your work cut out just staying alive, let alone having enough time to empty a constant stream of super-heated plasma into your chosen target.

### It's Doom, man!

So nothing's changed on that front, thankfully. This GBA translation is about as spot-on a conversion we could have hoped for. The level layout is exactly the same. All the enemies, pick-ups, secret doors and switches are where you expect them to be. Yup, there's no mistaking it, this is *Doom* alright, and it's all very satisfyingly familiar. But the best thing about all this accuracy has to be the sound effects. The reload clicks of your shotgun, the whining of the rising doors and the snorts and grunts of the imps are all faithfully recreated – so much so, that anyone who's overly familiar with the original will feel the hairs on the back of their neck tingle and stand up on end as they listen.

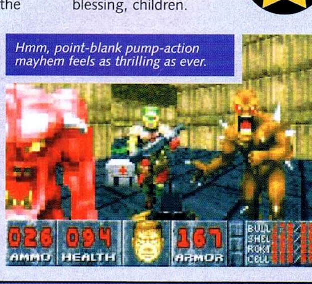
### Can't get enough of your blood, baby

As if you hadn't guessed, we just can't get enough of this – and with good reason. The single player is exactly how we wanted it to be. Fast, smooth, frantic, beautifully textured visuals which put all the other GBA shooters to shame, and superbly tight controls. Using the shoulder buttons to circle-strafe a potential recipient for your shower of bullets, for example, is as intuitive as you could hope for – again, making it all a pleasure to play. The multi-player is, perhaps just a *little* disappointing, as it's quite slow, but then after half an hour of indulging in frenzied plasma battles with three of your mates, this is a niggle that will soon be forgiven.

Anyway, we'll shut up now. It's *Doom*, isn't it? Just get out there and buy it. You have our blessing, children.




*Hmm, point-blank pump-action mayhem feels as thrilling as ever.*

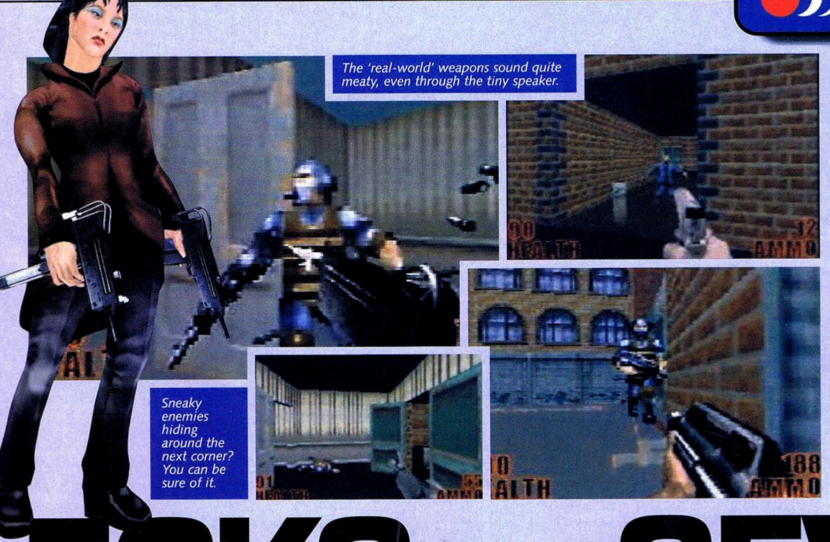



## FOUR-WAY PLAY

The thrill of FPS shooters comes from the ability to inflict pain and humiliation on your friends. The joy of whipping out a pump-action and loosing a cluster of lead into a mate's face is not to be underestimated – and so it's a disappointment that the multi-player is often painfully slow. After playing the single-player mode, switching to a four-player battle gave the impression that we were wading through a swamp. Still, you get used to it, and we suppose it's better to be slow than hideously jerky.



*It may be a little lacking on the speed side of things, but it's still a riot in multi-player.*




The 'real-world' weapons sound quite meaty, even through the tiny speaker.

Sneaky enemies hiding around the next corner? You can be sure of it.

## ECKS MARKS THE SPOT

As you're no doubt aware by now, you have the option to choose from one of two characters at the start of the game. Ecks – an ex-cop – and Sever – Eck's femme-fatale nemesis. Even though their abilities are identical, each has their own storyline (taken from scripts from the forthcoming film) and slightly different paths through the game. For example, on one level – playing as Ecks – you have to snipe Sever through a window while she chucks grenades at you. When you play as Sever, it's the other way round, with you as the one chucking grenades while Ecks has his sights on you. Smart.

# ECKS vs SEVER

**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** Crawfish **Price:** £35 **Save:** Password **Players:** 1-4 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now

Going head-to-head with classic FPS *Doom* isn't an easy thing to do by any stretch of the imagination. After all, *Doom* is *the* grand-daddy of shooters and has already proved itself as a worthy single-player and an outstanding multi-player blast. *Ecks vs Sever* on the other hand is a game licensed from a film that isn't even out yet. So far, so not very good.

Preconceptions aside, though, *Ecks vs Sever* holds up very well. Despite not being as good-looking as its rival – it doesn't have any floor or ceiling textures for a start – it does have a number of points in its favour. Firstly, this slight lack of visual detail enables the game to boast slicker movement than any other FPS on the GBA – in fact, the game rarely slows down, no matter how much bullet-induced mayhem's filling the GBA's tiny screen.

### Demons out

Thankfully, that's not all it has going for it. *Ecks vs Sever* is also far more dynamic in terms of what your character can do. Firstly, you have the ability to crouch. This allows you to dodge enemy gunfire, hide behind walls and crawl through vents, enabling you to approach each mission objective both stealthily and with guns blazing. Together with neat features such as sniping and infra-red goggles, *Ecks vs Sever* manages to provide players with far more to engage with than just spraying white hot plasma at angry demons.

### Severance play

It's this realism and mission-based blasting that puts *Ecks vs Sever* in a league of its own. If you're looking for a shooter that requires more than just razor-sharp reflexes then this is well worth considering. Every mission requires you to do something different – whether it's taking out stealthy snipers, wading through legions of SWAT team operatives, giving chase to tough bosses or escaping from an imminent bomb blast, there's more than enough to keep you interested.

You'll also find that this is one seriously hard nut to crack. Quite simply, some of the stages in this game are absolutely rock solid, and can only be beaten by taking your time and thinking through your next course of action by avoiding unnecessary firefights until you're suitably tooled up. While this can be frustrating on occasion, you'll relish in the fact that you've beaten something that you found initially impossible. What's even better is the fact that when you've played through the game once, you can go back and change character for a different slant and fresh challenge on each level.

### Buy Ecks?

So it all sounds pretty tasty, doesn't it? Unfortunately, it's all a little soulless. Unlike *Doom*, you get the feeling that you're not really playing anything particularly mind-blowing. All the ingredients are there, but it lacks the excitement you get from laying waste to a room full of alien scum. In *Ecks,* all you're faced with is samey corridors filled with near-identical enemies, and after pumping them with the requisite number of bullets – only for them to fall without so much as a splatter of claret – you find it's difficult to satisfy the old blood lust.

Gore isn't everything, admittedly. But *Ecks* lacks a certain *je ne sais quoi*, which is a shame, as it's an otherwise well-crafted shooter.





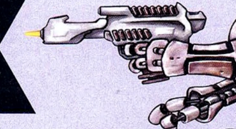


This is one tough shooter. These body armoured folk take ages to eliminate – and there's plenty more than enough of 'em.






# PHALANX





**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** Kemco **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1 **Out:** Now

Apart from the frustratingly tricky *Iridion 3D*, shooter fans have had very little to satisfy their button-pumping, knuckle-knackering skills – until now.

*Phalanx* is everything you'd expect from a side-scrolling 2D shooter. With the inevitable galaxy-saving plot under its belt (via some nicely-drawn anime stills), it's up to you to get saddled up in your tiny spaceship and tackle wave after wave of enemy ships using your wide-ranging complement of weapons. Stay alive for the duration and you'll eventually come to a stand-off with a screen-filling, laser-spewing boss. After figuring out its weak points and attack patterns it's game over for him, and the next level for you.

So it's classic stuff all the way, then. What Phalanx lacks in originality (it enjoyed some success on the SNES) it makes up for in speed, challenge and solidity. First of all, it's never unfair. Unlike in *Iridion* – where you had trouble avoiding anything – there is always a way to escape from encroaching enemy projectiles, so failure to do so is nearly always your own fault. On top of this there's a satisfying diversity to the weapons and power-ups, the kind you're genuinely miffed to lose and ecstatic when you get to use them again. Your ship also has three-stage manoeuvrability adjustment, so weaving between hazards is a little easier. Combine this with a decent learning curve, a tough challenge, some well-designed, great-looking levels and the ability to turn off your GBA and restart where you left off, and you've got the finest 2D shooter the console has to offer.

**4**




Even on the GBA's screen, projectiles aren't hard to spot – they're always red.




Basic, but high score junkies will love it.





Some of the layered backrounds are lush.

# MECH PLATOON

**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** Kemco **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1-4 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now




You can even salvage and recycle your broken Mechs.

Moving units isn't as fiddly as it looks.

Now here's a pleasant surprise. It's real-time-strategy – very much in the *Command & Conquer* mould – in the palm of your hand. Other than the GBC's superb *Warlocked* (NGC/48, 5 stars), strategy games on handhelds are few and far between. This time, Kemco are at the helm, and they've delivered a well-crafted build-and-battle game that's absolutely top notch.

Taking control of a handful of lumbering Mechs and buildings, the tutorial takes you through the basics, step by step. It's a pretty familiar setup, really. First, you mine the necessary raw materials. With these you can build newer, more important buildings and units, which in turn allow you to produce even better equipment and installations to fight your war. Once the tutorial is over, you're then presented with a choice between three different warring factions, each with their own specialised units – like close combat, long-range weapons or superlative speed. After choosing your preferred side it's off to war, where you get to indulge in more complicated building activities, resource management and combat unit development.

You'd expect this to all be a bit of a nightmare on the GBA's small screen, but it actually works quite well. Initially, things feel a little fiddly, but before you know it you'll be selecting groups and deploying them for combat in the blink of an eye. There's also a bewildering amount of depth to the development of your combat units. By recycling your raw materials and broken Mechs you can develop new and improved parts with which to fit your army.

All in all, very therapeutic and highly enjoyable gaming, and well worth investing in. Top stuff.







There's a hostage to be rescued on the left. Get to it.



That oversized neck there is ripe for the slicing.

# LADY SIA

**GBA REVIEW | From:** TDK Mediactive **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1 **Out:** Now



The cartoony backdrops are top hole.

Where are all the platformers? After the GBC's tidal wave of substandard *Mario* wannabes, we would've bet our grans that the Advance would see three mediocre left-to-right scrollers for every quality title released.

As it stands, *Lady Sia* is just one of a handful of run-'n'-jump carts on offer for the portable wondermachine – and, even more bizarrely, it's *not* an ugly scab on the face of platforming. Developers RFX Interactive have not only made *Lady Sia* a pleasure to play, they've also imbued the game with *character* – thanks to some splendid visuals, a bulging cast list of nicely-designed characters, and a sassy star who's a *huge* improvement on the developer's previous hero, the odious Tonic of *Tonic Trouble* 'fame'.

It's RFK's spit and polish that's given *Lady Sia* its biggest boost. There's no jerkiness, sluggishness in the controls or leaps of faith here, and you can *feel* the way everything's been designed, tested, tweaked and perfected. Because Sia's movement around the beautiful landscapes is so elegant and responsive to the D-pad, and because there are no nasty bugs or glitches to have you threatening to smash the GBA's screen in, *Lady Sia* is great fun to begin with.

*But*. Despite a decent complement of diverting moments – floating on rafts, flying atop a winged griffin, transforming into a huge yeti – *Lady Sia* suffers from a crippling lack of imagination. It's all run to the right, stab that monster, collect that jewel, flip that switch, and so on and so on. After three or four levels of that, your attention's likely to start wandering elsewhere.

Still, at least *Lady Sia* isn't an *Atlantis*, or an *Inspector Gadget*, or even a *Pinobee*. And for that reason, the lady is a champ.

**3**

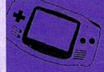




Frying tonight, courtesy of an electrified fence.

# DEXTER'S LABORATORY

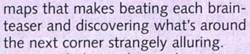
**GBA REVIEW From:** BAM! **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1-4 **Single cart link-up:** Yes **Out:** Now



It *tries*, we suppose. But *Dexter's Laboratory*, while being more than usually bulging with interesting ideas and fresh approaches, just isn't able to maximise its own potential.

That's a shame, because the puzzly heart beating at the centre of this cartoon tie-in is difficult not to like. Dexter's job involves little more than finding the right object to use in each mini-puzzle – a fuse for a broken computer, an access card for a door lock – and avoiding wandering gribblies, but there's something about the isometric perspective and compact maps that makes beating each brain-teaser and discovering what's around the next corner strangely alluring.

Neat little touches such as Dexter's extendable grabbing hand, which snakes around any object and towards fleeing Dee Dees courtesy of the D-pad, are two-a-penny. But it's difficult to shake the feeling that so much more could have been made of these intriguing concepts – as it is, *Dexter's Laboratory* runs out of steam after a couple of levels. Here's to a much-improved sequel.



**2**

# POWERPUFF GIRLS MOJO-A-GO-GO

**GBA REVIEW | From:** BAM! **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1 **Out:** Now

Exactly *why* a children's comedy cartoon show has been turned into a shoot-'em-up, we're not sure. But one thing *is* crystal-clear – *Mojo-a-Go-Go* is a real Steve Penk of a game.

Put simply, *nothing happens*. The three boggle-eyed Powerpuffs hover over a scrolling cityscape, spitting lasers at robots and satellites, and… continue to do so. For seven stunningly tedious levels. The way each stage's pattern of enemies almost *exactly resembles* the last would be hilarious – if you hadn't wasted £35 on an endlessly-looping slideshow of lifeless backgrounds and poorly-animated automatons.

*Mojo-a-Go-Go*'s only 'big idea' is the ability to grab the odd bit of scenery and chuck it at the identikit enemies, and even that's poorly executed. Forget about Steve Penk – we'd rather spend a year trapped in a room with him than play this rubbish again.





The backgrounds here repeat like a bad '70s cartoon.

**1**



# WWF: ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA

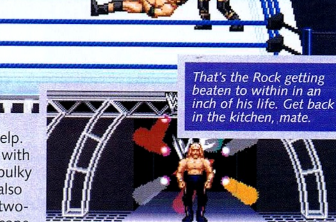


**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** THQ **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1/2 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now




*He's always in the kitchen, but we've yet to see the culinary results.*




*That's the Rock getting beaten to within an inch of his life. Get back in the kitchen, mate.*

WWF might not have found its way out of Channel 4's graveyard 3am slot yet, but its popularity shows little sign of dwindling. So, if GBA is this Christmas' hottest toy, you can expect *WWF: Road to Wrestlemania* to rocket to the top of the festive game charts.

Not that it deserves to. Natsume's game isn't a *complete* disaster – it's packed with modes and peppered with pleasing touches, such as the speech-laden photo-quality cut-scenes that greet each wrestler's entrance. By and large, it's a good deal more polished than THQ's wealth of N64 grapple-'em-ups.

However, *Road to Wrestlemania* is just too *basic*, reeking of abortive mid-'90s attempts at bringing the wonders of wrestling to the video screen. The side-on perspective doesn't help. It gives you meatier 'rasslers, with pecs and other frighteningly bulky muscles clearly visible, but it also makes fights disappointingly two-dimensional. That limits the scope for different moves – you'll be lucky to see more than five or six different punches, kicks, holds and throws during a 20-minute match – and it makes every scrap an eye-glazingly tedious affair.

Inevitably, bring a friend or three and the excitement level moves up a couple of notches. It's hard not to dribble with glee as two of you grab a rival's leg each and pull in opposite directions. But The Rock and co's chronically limited inventory of moves just can't justify draining eight batteries at a time, and the sluggish controls and loooong fights pale next to BAM's enjoyable *Fire Pro Wrestling*.

The absence of a comedic create-a-wrestler mode is the final straw. The N64's *WWF Attitude* is a better – and cheaper – bet for Nintendo fans anxious to fiddle with Triple H, Stone Cold and the rest. Avoid like whatever it is that The Rock is 'cooking'.

**2**









*The pleasing isometric perspective reminds us of racers past. Bless.*

# DRIVEN



**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** BAM! **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1-4 **Single cart link-up:** Yes **Out:** Now

The Sylvester Stallone movie won't be winning any oscars – which makes it all the more incredible that BAM!'s GBA interpretation of Driven is one of the best movie tie-ins since *GoldenEye*.

*Driven* is a little bit of every retro racer we've ever loved – *Super Sprint*, *RC Pro-Am*, *Super Cars* and other classics are all here in spirit. There's little to fault – the top-down, isometric racing is supremely fast; the handling is nigh-on perfect; the cute animated scenery is a joy; and the number of other cars on the tarmac, bouncing off the trackside and jostling for the pole, is impressive. Even the multiplayer is well above average.

The only banana in the tailpipe is the lack of an on-screen map – finding your way around the well-designed tracks is a hit-and-miss affair (literally). Otherwise, we're very pleasantly surprised – and the fact that 'Sly' has apparently refused to lend his chiselled fizog to the game is a definite bonus.

**4**

# MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX



**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** Activision **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1/2 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now



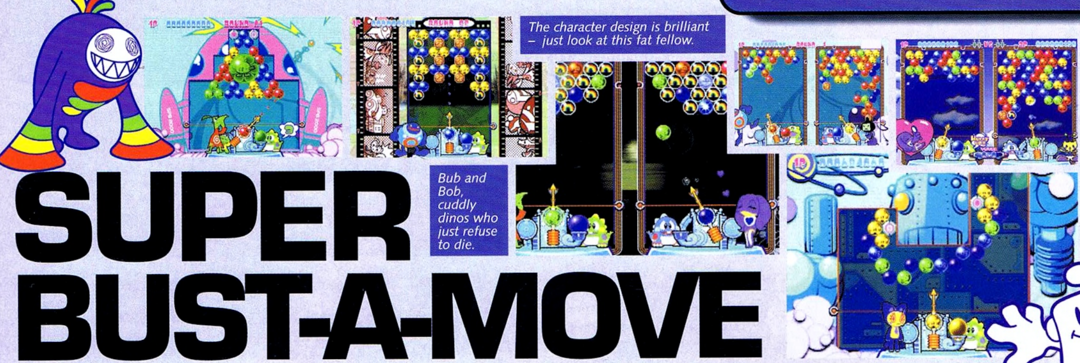

*It's surprising how many stunts you can extract from the GBA's D-pad and four buttons. BMX is A-OK.*

That Hawk fella's got a lot to answer for. Since he lent his name to arguably the GBA's most successful launch title we're seeing every extreme sportster and his dog being squeezed onto chewing gum-sized carts.

Mat Hoffman is the latest trickmaster to land his own game. Essentially, it's *Tony Hawk's* with a bike, which means pulling combos and racing up and over verts, rails, spines and funboxes.

The animation on the riders is as tidy and detailed as the splendid *Tony*. But it's the odd camera perspective that's the cause of most of *Mat's* woes, restricting your steering and making judging the position of stars and the like impossible at times. But come to terms with that and you'll agree – BMX bikes *are* a lot of fun.

**3**



The character design is brilliant – just look at this fat fellow.

Bub and Bob, cuddly dinos who just refuse to die.

# SUPER BUST-A-MOVE

**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** Ubi Soft **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1/2 **Single cart link-up:** No **Out:** Now

After the depressing travesty that is *Tetris Worlds* (see below), *Super Bust-A-Move's* arrival in the NGC office felt like the first warm rays of summer sun on our faces. This is portable puzzling as it *should* be.

The concept is simple – fire coloured bubbles, matching triplets of like-coloured spheres to remove them from the screen – but it's instantly, impossibly compulsive. The plain puzzle mode, where it's just you against a seemingly never-ending series of bubble-filled screens, is brilliant. But the two-player mode, a brain-meddlingly chaotic battle where any cleared bubbles get dumped on your opponent's side, is worth the price of the cart on its tod. A crying shame, then, that you'll need two carts to play.

The developers – the sinister-sounding Altron Corporation – have coped well with the GBA's titchy screen, and the cartoony presentation lends *Bust-A-Move* an attractive *Parappa The Rapper*-esque feel. It takes an annoying number of button presses to skip through all the menu screens and reach the actual game, but that's a minor niggle – Altron have clearly spent many long evenings ensuring *Bust-A-Move* on Game Boy Advance lives up to its aging arcade daddy.

In short, then, it's a must – and, praise the Lord, they've remembered to include a fully-featured high-score table.






Player 1 is about to lose! Player 2 celebrates with a disgusting belch.

No scores! Game automatically ends at level 15! This is rubbish.

# TETRIS WORLDS



**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** THQ **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1-4 **Single cart link-up:** Yes **Out:** Now

So, the *Tetris* baton – which has passed from Russia, to Mirrorsoft, to Nintendo, then back to Russia – now lies in the trembling hands of THQ and Blue Planet Software, who have the unenviable job of living up to the original Game Boy *Tetris*.

And, boy, have they messed up. Partly because they've stumbled down the same blind alley that countless predecessors have followed – trying and failing to improve the original *Tetris* concept with needless twists and silly ideas. Partly, it's the animated deer and penguins that wander by in the background and distract your brick manoeuvring. But it's mainly because, incredibly, there are *no scores*.

Yup, *Tetris Worlds* doesn't have a points meter, or count how many lines you've cleared. So without a high score to chase, what's the point of playing? In one easy move, Blue Planet have single-handedly ruined the best videogame in the world. Buy *Tetris DX* instead.

1

# MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS



**GBA REVIEW** | **From:** Midway **Price:** £35 **Save:** On-cart **Players:** 1 **Single cart link-up:** Yes **Out:** Now

Where Game Boy Color was the system of choice for 2D platformers, GBA is becoming a powerful magnet for wrinkly gaming oldies. And Pocket Studios have brought four coin-op classics to our purple friend.

US coders Digital Eclipse brought blinding versions of most of these titles to GBC – so we can only shake our heads and wonder why these GBA interpretations are so lacking. Younger gamers might not care that there are hundreds of little details that aren't *quite* right – the way your ship bounces off asteroids in *Sinistar*, the path of your ostrich as it glides down the screen in *Joust*, and so on. But they'll notice bigger problems, such as a crippling lack of speed in the usually superfast *Defender*, and the inability of the GBA's buttons to cope with *Robotron*'s multi-directional firing.

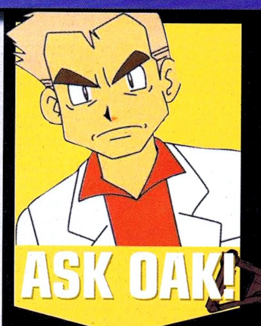
Full marks to Pocket Studios for nailing the classic visuals and sounds – *Sinistar*'s boss mutt ers 'Die, human!' in just the right spine-chilling tone of voice. But the technical niggles that litter *Midway's Greatest Arcade Hits* ruin the quartet of classics for anyone old enough to remember them the first time around.



Joust – an all-time classic, but not here.

2

**We want your Game Boy tips!** Send them to: GB Tips, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. The best one each month will win an Action Replay Online cart from Datel (01785 810826, www.codejunkies.co.uk).



# ASK OAK!

**"This month's haul of questions has thrown up some pretty specific problems for those of you trying to bolster your Pokédex with some elusive 'mon. As usual, then, here's this month's FAQ..."**

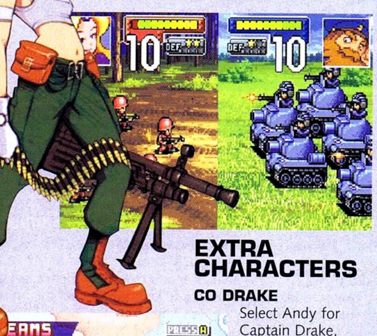
**Becky Chandler, Dursley:** in *Pokémon Silver,* I've got to Vermilion City and earned the Thunder Badge, but even though I've fought plenty of Dark-type Pokémon owned by other trainers, I still can't find any of the pesky blighters in the wild. Can you tell me where can I locate some?

**Prof. Oak:** No problem, Becky. You're not actually that far from your first sighting, as it happens. Make your way to Saffron City and win the Marsh Badge. Now head for route 7 at night-time – it's here that you'll get the chance to catch your first dark-type Pokémon. There are two available for capture here: the more common Murkrow, and the rarer Houndour. I suggest you don't leave the area until both are caught – Houndour in particular is a very useful Pokémon for your active team.

**Kyle Morrison, Brighton:** On Route 14 in *Pokémon Gold*, just after Fuchsia City, there's a girl willing to trade for a Chansey. But I can't find one anywhere. Where the heck is that pink Pokémon?

**Prof. Oak:** Believe it or not, the Chansey you're looking for is actually hiding in the same patch of grass the girl is standing in. They're pretty rare though, so you'll have to keep fighting and searching for some time. It took me about an hour for one to eventually appear. Once you've found it, you can trade it in for her Aerodactyl. Lovely.

# ADVANCE WARS



## EXTRA CHARACTERS

### CO DRAKE

Select Andy for Captain Drake, Naval Clash, Wings of Victory and Battle Mystery in Campaign mode, and complete them successfully. He'll then be available for you to buy for 50 coins.




### CO EAGLE

Select Sami for Captain Drake, Naval Clash, Wings of Victory and Battle Mystery in Campaign mode. Once these have been completed you'll enter a 'Rivals' battle. Win that and Eagle will be available for purchase for 80 coins.

### CO KANBEI

Simply complete the campaign and Co Kanbei appear in the Battle Maps section for 50 coins.

### CO GRIT

Select Max for the fourth mission in Campaign mode and complete it. Grit will then be available for 50 coins.

### CO SONJA

Unlock and win her secret missions in the campaign and complete them all plus the campaign itself. She'll now be available to buy for 50 coins.

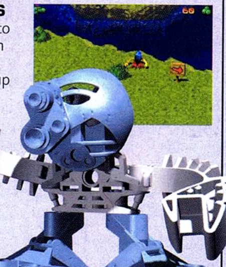
### CO STRUM

Purchase Cos Eagle, Sonja, Drake, Grit and Kanbei, and Strum will be available for you to buy for 100 coins – although you will only be able to use him in Versus mode.

### CO NELL

Achieve S grades for everything in Campaign mode, Advance and War Room mode.

# LEGO BIONICLE



### UNLOCK MINIGAMES

If you can't be bothered to see *Lego Bionicle* through to the end with each different character, start up a new game and enter the following codes to access your Bionicle's ever-so-secret minigame:

3LT154 – **Lewa game**
9MA268 – **Gali game**
8MR472 – **Onua game**

# MARIO ADVANCE




### LEVEL WARP

If you manage to find a vase which you *can't* enter, look for a nearby potion and throw it next to the vase. Now enter the door – the chances are that it'll be a secret level warp. This trick only works on level 1-3 onwards.

# ACTION REPLAY CODES

### XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

**Infinite lives**
910590C9

**Constant air**
913868C7

**99 diamonds**
919977C9

**Max hearts**
910891C9

### GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

**Infinite lives**
910AACC0

**Permanent armour for Arthur**
9109C0C5

**Invincibility**
0100FBCA
019CFDCA
0138FCCA

### RAINBOW ISLANDS

**Invincibility**
9163CBC1



### 1942

**Infinite lives**
910059CC2






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# IT'S-A ME LUIGI!

So, back in NGC/59, we asked you to make your own Luigi. Designing and constructing a 3D model of everyone's second-favourite plumber would require far more planning, dedication and hard graft than simply scribbling your name on a postcard – so we expected 20, maybe 30 entries tops.

As you can see, we were *ever so slightly* out. Soon, we were receiving five to ten *entire postbags* full of Luigis every day, and Alan's side of the office became home to a belief-beggaring mountain of cardboard boxes standing well over eight feet high. It was a response so staggering, we even got a mention in the local paper.

The day after the closing date, we spent over seven hours unpacking every last cardboard package, painstakingly building up a crowd of something like 300 Luigis made from every material imaginable. Sorry if your Luigi isn't pictured here – many were destroyed beyond recognition in the post – but *huge* thanks to everyone who sent in a model. Luigi's obviously more popular than we thought... NGC

## THE RUNNERS-UP

We were so impressed with the level of response to our compo, we decided to award runner-up prizes to four of the best Luigis. Each wins a subscription to NGC.

***Bennet Aldous*** *from Yorkshire sculpted this stunning model. Tops!*

*Weeks of work must have gone into this knitted scene from* ***Carol****.*



The only puppet Luigi we received, and what a beauty. By **Anonymous**.

This modified RC car from Sutton Coldfield's **Richard Whillock** made for a heap of office fun.

# THE WINNER!

So, here it is – the Luigi model that impressed us all enough to make its designers the winner of a shiny new Gamecube from CA Games. Congratulations to **Pat and Niki Baker** from **Herts**, who created this beautifully-crafted diorama.



NEXT MONTH...
GAMECUBE IN AMERICA
Nintendo's new baby makes its debut in the US – and brings a heap of new games with it. Stand by for *first* reviews of...
STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER
XGIII EXTREME RACING
CRAZY TAXI
MADDEN NFL 2002
...and more!



REVIEWED!

# PIKMIN

Real-time strategy in Shigsy's garden – we rate Gamecube's strangest game!

PLUS!

## TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

Heaven is a half-pipe – we go hands-on with the Hawkster's first stunning Gamecube outing!




AND!

## BATMAN: DARK TOMORROW

The Dark Knight's adventures according to Kemco – first amazing in-game shots!



# NGC ISSUE 63

ON SALE WEDNESDAY 12TH DECEMBER

All magazine contents and free gifts subject to change. Sorry about that.



**Reserve a copy of NGC!**

Fill in this form, hand it to your newsagent and ask them to save you a copy of NGC/63 – before it disappears from the shelves!

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SCIENCE YEAR

Welcome to Club GC, the part of the magazine designed to help you get the most out of your games.




# POKEMON STADIUM 2 BATTLE PLANNER



**Are your meek monsters finding battle a bind? Toughen them up with our top guide!**



64

## ALSO THIS MONTH...




# Thrash your mates every time with our POKÉMON STADIUM 2 BATTLE PLANNER

***From dirty tactics to useful battling tips – we have everything you need to know to create your perfect Pokémon team...***



## WHAT WE SAID




We reviewed *Pokémon Stadium 2* in **NGC**/60 and this is what we concluded:

"As good a companion to the Game Boy games as you could ever wish for. Thoroughly wonderful."

**VERDICT** 90




## THE BASICS

### PREPARE YOURSELF

First, some basics. It's not absolutely necessary to know your enemy – it certainly helps, but it's not always possible to know what their Pokémon will be, let alone what their plans are. So it's vitally important you select a good, balanced team.

### TYPE-MATCHING

Do your best to balance your team with as many Pokémon Types which can cater for every eventuality. Choosing an entirely fire-based team, for example, will ensure you a humiliating defeat, while a Fire-Water-Electric-Psychic foursome will prove not only harder to bring down, but will gave you a range of attacking and defensive options.

### MOVESETS

Even though it's a good idea to ensure you're not type-matched by your opponent, remember that it's not always the end of the world. Spend some time getting a balanced moveset together. For example, if your Pokémon is weak against electric-type 'mon, compensate for this by making sure it has some kind of hard-hitting physical attacks. If your Pokémon will last only a couple of hits, it's better to make sure it can inflict *some* damage before it faints.

### BLOCKERS

Blockers often give you time to bring a battle down to your own pace – frustrating your opponent and ensuring that you absorb many of their stronger moves. Learn the PP of some of the game's better moves. If the enemy initiates an attack, use your blocker's superior defence or evasive abilities to absorb the pain.

### SURPRISE

There's nothing better than whipping out a supposedly weak Pokémon only for it to become the biggest pain in the backside your opponent has ever seen. Some Pokémon work brilliantly even if they have *no* significant attacking moves. Experiment with combinations of status-manipulating attacks to scupper the opposition before you bring out your heavy hitters. This is a *very* annoying (and effective) tactic.







# TOP POKÉ-TYPES



## NORMAL: SNORLAX
Great for lengthy battles thanks to his solid defence and HP quota. Using rest will raise HP and cure status disorders. If you equip him with Curse, Rest, Double Edge and Earthquake, any challenger will have very tough ride on their hands.

## FIGHTING: HITMONLEE
Awesome speed makes up for a slight deficiency in Defence and Special stats. Hitmonlee can annihilate normal and fighting types if equipped with Seismic Toss and Hi-Jump Kick. When faced with Psychic or Flying types though, he'll be in a world of pain.

## GROUND: DUGTRIO
Except no substitute when it comes to ground-based 'mon. Superb against Electric Pokémon, Dugtrio has good speed and can learn both Earthquake and Dig techniques, with the latter making him impervious to attack for his transitional turn.

## FLYING: ZAPDOS
Any of the ledgendary birds are good here, as is Gyarados – but for us it has to be Zapdos. The reason for this is that most flying types are highly susceptible to electric attacks. Not so with Zapdos, whose reasonable resistance to lightning makes him the best choice.

## BUG: VARIABLE
Pretty lame, but a few can be of use. Scyther is possibly the best to use, but when it doesn't actually learn any bug-moves naturally, there seems little point in recommend it.

## GHOST: GENGAR
We don't know anyone who doesn't appreciate Gengar's abilities. Curse is a nightmare to deal with when used properly, while Hypnosis and Dream Eater have seen off more competition than we'd care to mention.

## ROCK: GOLEM
Superb against Fire, Ice, Bug and Flying Pokémon. Its rock moves, Rock Slide and Rock Throw are pretty competent in battle – but unfortunately, there are plenty of other Pokémon that are up to the job, if not more so.

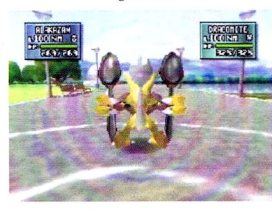
## DRAGON: DRAGONITE
If you get lucky and your opponent doesn't have an ice-based attack such as Blizzard, then you're on to a winner with this one. Dragon Rage is a pretty tasty attack – delivering a decent amount of damage to almost every Pokémon type out there.

## STEEL: STEELIX
One of the best-looking Pokémon in the game and immune to many attacks the opposition can throw at you. A



great Pokémon to wear down opponents – its Iron Tail will make even the most hardy trainer's eyes water. Top Stuff.

## DARK: TYRANITAR
Tyranitar is the favourite of many trainers as its Crunch move can devastate the enemy with ease. It's also one of the most useful Pokémon against Ghost and Psychic types. Far and away one of the strongest Pokémon in the game.



## PSYCHIC: VARIABLE
The most important type in the game, and an absolute must in any team. Mewtwo is by far the strongest, but choosing a psychic type depends on the rest of your team. Mew is a little weaker in some areas, but it can use any TM and HM available.

## ICE: ARTICUNO
If your opponent has Dragonite in their team then Articuno will sort them out good and proper with a Blizzard attack. At level 60+ it's a formidable foe – but because it's a dual-type Pokémon, you'll find it's susceptible to more attacks than you'd like.

## GRASS: TANGELA
If you're confident in your skills, then a Grass type can be well worth the effort as Bind, Sleep Powder and especially



Mega-Drain will be the undoing of many Electric, Rock, Ground or Water-based Pokémon. A right-royal pain in the backside.

## FIRE: FLAREON/ARCANINE
Arcanine is not one to be underestimated, as its decent HP and high speed will see it through most tough battles. If you're the super-confident type, Flareon is the one for you. It's a nasty attack-machine that can decimate an enemy.

## ELECTRIC: JOLTEON
Definitely our favourite of the bunch. Why? Because by training it in Pin Missile you'll be the scourge of cocky Psychic-type abusers. It also learns both Thunder Wave and Thunder on its own and it's one of the fastest in the game.

## WATER: BLASTOISE
The old faithful of the Pokémon world. Blastoise has some of the most balanced stats in the game – bar speed – and is consequently most people's favourite water type.



# SNEAKY 'N' CHEEKY

Use these tactics sparingly and your opponent won't know what hit 'em.



- Don't hold down the R button when selecting attacks. Remember your move lists by heart – that way you won't give anything away.

- Force switches by using irritating status effects like Clamp, Bind, Wrap and Fire Spin. Your opponent won't want to keep that Pokémon in play for long. Good when they have a benched Pokémon that needs teaching a lesson.



- Mess with Pokémons' names to cause confusion (like giving your Pokémon a different Pokémon's name) – just when your opponent thinks you're going to bring out a Swinub, you end up smacking him down with a high-level Raikou.



- Throw some less popular Pokémon into the mix. More often than not, your opponent won't know how to deal with them. Geraint likes to whip out his high-level Ariados with its crippling and poisoning moves, before pulling it back to the bench – the cheeky scamp.

- Predicting your opponent's next move is vital. This is easily done by looking at your *own* active Pokémon. If it's a water type that's taken down your opponent, chances are he'll be looking for an electric type to counter. Switching to a ground type will see his plan foiled.

- Train two near-identical Pokémon, but give them totally different movesets. If you can balance one off against the other, your opponent won't know whether to laugh or cry. Priceless!

# The tips you want, quickly...

# TIPS EXTRA



P67

**DK RACING**

*A big banana-bunch of cheat codes to grab you by your racing onions. Ahem.*






P68

**DR KITTS**

*A potentially illegal dose of Majora's Mask remedies dispensed.*



P68

**READERS' TIPS**

*Got some advice? Then spit it out! Or perhaps promises of shiny gifts do not interest you, then?*



# YOUR MOST WANTED TIPS

*What do you want? Tips! When do you want them? Immediately!*

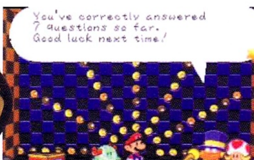
## PAPER MARIO

**CHUCK QUIZMO'S QUIZ**

Chuck Quizmo appears in 64 places throughout *Paper Mario*. If his questions are stumping you, check out all the answers

- What is the name of the younger sister of Goombario? *Goombaria.*
- What ability does Goombario frequently use? *Tattle.*
- What colour of pants was the Goomba King wearing? *Red, white.*
- What is the colour of the block you can break with the first hammer you collected? *Yellow.*
- Which of Mario's battle commands is on the far left? *Jump.*
- How many windows does the Goomba House in Goomba Village have? *One.*
- What's the name of the leader of the Red and Blue Goomba Bros.? *Goomba King.*
- What colour are Luigi's pants? *Blue.*
- How many members are there in Goombario's family? *Six.*
- What will you receive when you get the right answer in a quiz? *Star Piece.*
- What is the name of the smart Toad living in Toad Town? *Russ T.*
- How many buildings are there in Koopa Village? *Six.*
- How many Star Spirits do you have to save? *Seven.*
- Of the following, who is NOT a member of the Koopa Bros.? *Blue ninjakoopa.*






- How many coins are needed to buy a mushroom at the shop in Koopa Village? *Four.*
- Where does Merluvlee, who tells fortunes about special things, live? *Shooting Star Summit.*
- What is the name of the character who joined you at the Koopa Bros. fortress? *Bombette.*
- What colour is Bowser's hair? *Red.*
- What's the name of the elderly Koopa Troopa who always asks for errands to be run? *Koopa Koot.*
- How many Bob-ombs besides Bombette were imprisoned in Koopa Bros. fortress? *Four.*

**SUPER BLOCK LOCATIONS**

If you can't find all the blocks that power up your companions, you'll never be a meister in combat. So here they all are:

1. Two screens south of the Dry Dry Outpost entrance, at the oasis.

2. Next to the spring in the Dry Dry Ruins.

3. To the left of the heart block on the same screen as the Mt. Rugged station, there is a stone block. You'll need the super hammer to smash it.

4. From the Toad Town Tunnel entrance, go left twice, then into the pipe. Cross the platforms, go up the elevators and down the other hole.

## JET FORCE GEMINI





**GOLDWOOD TARGET RANGE**
Obtain the gold rank on the Goldwood Floyd level.

**JEFF AND BARRY ARCADE RACING I**
Finish in first place at Jeff and Barry Arcade Racing at Ichor Arcade.

**JEFF AND BARRY ARCADE RACING II**
Finish in first place at Jeff and Barry Arcade Racing II at Ichor Arcade.

**GREENWOOD VILLAGE RACE TRACK**
Finish in first place on both Jeff and Barry Arcade Racing games.

**KING OF THE HILL**
Touch the totem pole in the Cerulean Holding Room.

**MIZAR 3D RACER**
Finish first in the races at Mizar's Palace.

**RITH ESSA MINE**
Collect the powered jetpacks for Juno and Vela first, then touch the totem pole that's been hidden away in Walkway Station.

**RITH ESSA TARGET RANGE**
Obtain the gold rank in Eschebone's Floyd level.

**SPACE STATION**
Touch the hidden totem pole in the Space Station Basement.

**TUNNELS**
Playing as the lovely Vela, touch the totem pole that's secreted inside Rith Essa Waterfalls.

## DIDDY KONG RACING



Enter these codes on the cheat menu. Obvious, eh?

TOXICOFFENDER All balloons are green
FREEFRUIT Start with 10 bananas
DOUBLEVISION Two players use same character
BODYARMOR All balloons are yellow
BOMBSAWAY All balloons are red
ROCKETFUEL All balloons are blue
OPPOSITESATTRACT All balloons are rainbows
NOYELLOWSTUFF No bananas in multiplayer mode
BYEBYEBALLOONS Computer can't use weapons
JOINTVENTURE Two-player adventure
TIMETOLOSE CPU is tougher
BLABBERMOUTH Changes horn sounds
BOGUSBANANAS Bananas slow you down
VITAMINB Unlimited bananas
ZAPTHEZIPPERS No zippers
FREEFORALL Fully powered-up balloons
JUKEBOX Adds Music Test to audio menu
ARNOLD Large players
TEENYWEENIES Small players
OFFROAD Four-wheel drive
WHODIDTHIS See credits
DODGYROMMER Display ROM checksum
EPC EPC lock-up display
EOLAOBFENRLONE Free Balloon

5. From the entrance to Tubba Blubba's castle, go as far left as you can and down the stairs.

6. Right by where you fought the ghost with the big lantern, take two platforms up.

7. In the jungle where you find the Yoshi kids, there are bridges two screens away from where you find Sushie. Take the bridges from the middle platform.

8. From the entrance to Mount Lavalava, go right, take the pulley, then go right again.

9. From where you pick up the ultra hammer, go right three times and up the spring, through the blocked door. Take the pulley almost all the way and do a carefully-timed jump.

10. From the entrance, go down through the wood, then left twice. There is a pattern of hidden blocks here, so push the blue button under each one.

11. From the Toad Town entrance to Toad Town Tunnels, go left, in the pipe, and down the stairs to another pipe. The ultra hammer will allow you to get through.

12. From Lily's perch, go left twice and follow the path above the stairs.

13. From the Wise Wisterwood, go left and solve the block puzzle by stomping in the following order: Red (on 1), Green (on 4), Red (don't stomp), Green (don't stomp), Purple (on 3), Green (on 2), Purple (on 6).

14. Find the Toad Town pier and use Sushie to surf to a hidden pipe.

15. From the Toad Town Tunnel entrance from Toad Town, go down, left twice and through the blue door. Use the pipe there, and go left. You need to have freed Klevar and obtained the hover boots.

16. On the Crystal Palace path, there are two diverging stairways near a white Clubba. The block is at the top of the second stairway.

## MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

**SECRET CODES**

Enter on the mission select screen.

Start with Rocket Launcher
R, L, Left-C, Right-C, Bottom-C.

Start with Silenced Pistol
Up-C, L, Right-C, Left-C, Top-C.

Start with Uzi
Right-C, Left-C, Right-C, Bottom-C, then R.

Infinite Ammo
Top-C, Z, Left-C, Z, L.




Invincibility
R, Z, Bottom-C, R, Bottom-C.

Kid Mode
Bottom-C, Top-C, R, L, Z.

Big Feet Mode
Bottom-C, R, Z, then Right-C and finally Left-C.

Big Head Mode
Bottom-C, R, Top-C, L, Left-C.

Start with 9mm Pistol
R, L, Bottom-C, then press Top-C two times.

## ACTION REPLAY

### STAR WARS EPISODE ONE: RACER

**All races finished first**
8111CB0C 3FFF
8111CB0E 3FFF
8111CB10 3FFF
8111CB12 00FF

**Unlock all characters**
8111CB14 007D
8111CB16 FFFF

**Open all tracks**
8111CB08 FFFF
8111C80A FFFF

**Infinite truguts**
8111CB1A FFFF

**Dave Twitch, Durham**

### DUKE NUKEM: ZERO HOUR

**Infinite health – Zero Hour**
8119C01D 0064

**Infinite health – Alien Mother**
8119F735 0064

**Infinite health – The Brothers Nukem**
8119D919 0064

**Infinite health – Brainstorm**
8119CCED 0064

**Infinite health – The Rack**
8119DEDD 0064

**Infinite health – Hydrogen Bomb**
8119E68D 0064

**Robbie Snickers, Hampshire**

For information about Action Replay carts, call Datel on **01785 810826** or visit **www.codejunkies.co.uk**

## YOUR TOP TIP

Found an interesting cheat, tip, secret bit or quirky thing to do in one of your games? Then send it to us immediately! Each month we'll stick the best into our Readers' Tips column over the page, and if you make it in, we'll send you a rather flash **NGC** pin badge. If you get the coveted number-one slot, you'll get something extra special.

cut out and send

Name ..........

Address ..........

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Postcode ..........

## HERE'S MY TOP TIP

It's for [game name]:

And I've found that if you:

## TIPS EXTRA

**Send to:** Tips Extra, **NGC** Magazine
30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW.
If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room.

Remember, the best one wins an Action Replay cart from Datel **(01785 810826, www.codejunkies.co.uk)**

# READERS' TOP 10 TIPS



## 1 PERFECT DARK

Go to Area 51: Infiltration with All Guns and Infinite Ammo on. Be invisible, and go to the locked door by the ramp in the secret underground hangar. Shoot near the guard there, then disappear. If you do it right, he'll open the door there for you to explore…

*Imran Rashid, Murthly*

## 2 PERFECT DARK

Start a game against a Dark Sim in Felicity with all weapons set to Farsight. Sit in the bogs right up against the door, then wait for them to come towards you. At the last second, shoot through the door and the game is all yours.

*Richard O'Mant, Middlesex*

## 3 PERFECT DARK

On Datadyne: Extraction, go into co-op mode and send one player to wait by the lift on the right. The other player then goes off to destroy the helicopter. The guy at the bottom will see the chopper briefly flash before his eyes as it falls. Weird, that.

*Henry Burton, Reading*

## 4 ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK

Complete Snowhead Temple, then go to the tree behind the blacksmith. Hit the tree with your sword and it will make a clinking sound, as if it were made of stone or metal. Odd, eh?

*James Pearson, Surrey*

## 5 ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK

Play Honey and Darling's game in Clock Town on the second day. Hop into a basket and Link will now run around in mid-air. Bizarre.

*Mark Boys, Suffolk*




## 6 WWF NO MERCY

If you're losing in a Triple Threat Iron Man match, throw one of your opponents out of the ring just before the time runs out. You'll always win the match, no matter how many times you've been pinned!

*Paul Hughes, Kirkby*

## 7 WWF NO MERCY

Select a Ladder Handicap match with two players against the CPU. Put the ladder in front of the announcer's table, then put your opponent on the table. The other person should do Kane's Flying Lariat on him from the ladder and you'll end up behind the barrier.

*Chris & Dan Burke, Wiltshire*




## 8 WWF NO MERCY

If you're having trouble beating someone in Championship Mode and there are Count Outs and DQs, quickly take them out of the ring and go backstage. You can smack them silly with weapons and get away with it back there!

*Barry Gannon, Scotland*

## 9 SUPER SMASH BROS

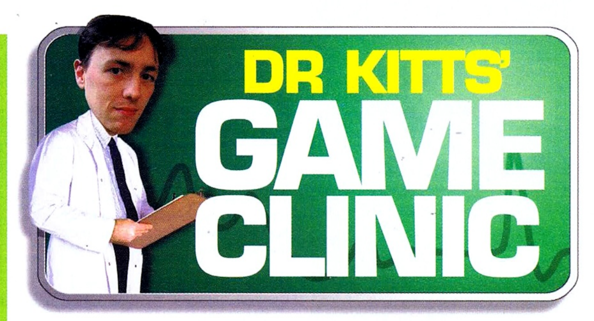
In the single player, get to the level where you fight Fox and go over to the nose of the ship. Hang on to the ledge and Fox will run right off, killing himself! If he does manage to catch you, just jump back up.

*Ryan Robinson, London*

## 10 CONKER'S BAD FUR DAY

Play as the Frenchies in the Beach mode. Hide behind the plunger until the time reaches one. If you get shot when the time reaches zero, time will stop, and you can run around blowing up the evil Tedizs!

*Andreas Engstrom, Sweden*



# DR KITTS' GAME CLINIC

## Now this won't hurt a bit. As long as you pay for the anaesthetic.

Dr Kitts,
I can't find the Song of the Sun in *Ocarina of Time*. Please help!

*Sheehan Maller, Leicester*

**Dr Kitts polishes up his tarnished french horn.**
*Go to Kakariko Graveyard at night. Once there, you'll see a large gravestone at the back. Check the two stones on either side to fight the Poe brothers. Next, play Zelda's lullaby to open the royal grave. Kill the bats down there and you'll learn the song.*

Dr Kitts,
How do you get the feather board in *Snowboard Kids*?

*Adam Wilson, Surrey*

**Dr Kitts paints his nose pink and dons some goggles.**
*It's a case of getting a mammoth score in Animal Land. When you get to the halfpipe area, repeatedly do your simplest special trick off the walls until you have about 50 seconds left on the clock. Do another special trick off the jump, then you'll go backwards as you hit the shallow halfpipe. Next, do as the sign says, then release A when you touch the part that says "Go!". Do one last trick and make it across the pipe.*

Dr Kitts,
I've heard there's a limousine in *San Francisco Rush 2049* – how do you unlock it?

*Warren Thorogood, Upminster*

**Dr Kitts practices the Charleston with a mouldering corpse.**
*Listen son, this is what happens when you go to other sources for your gaming info. The little tidbit you've heard really is piffle. There are push-button codes to unlock several other cars in* San Francisco Rush 2049 *– or, if*

## MAJORA'S MASK



Dr Kitts,
In the Stone Tower Temple in *Zelda: Majora's Mask*, there's a dark room containing a big cube and a hole in the ceiling. What exactly am I supposed to do here?

*Oliver Hicks, Buckinghamshire*

**Dr Kitts slaps on some factor 50.**
*Use the mirror shield to redirect the sun on to the block (it's in the mini-dungeon beneath the well at the top of Ikana Canyon). Mind you, you'll need the Gibdo mask from the Music Box House to complete that. Enjoy!*

## BEETLE ADVENTURE RACING





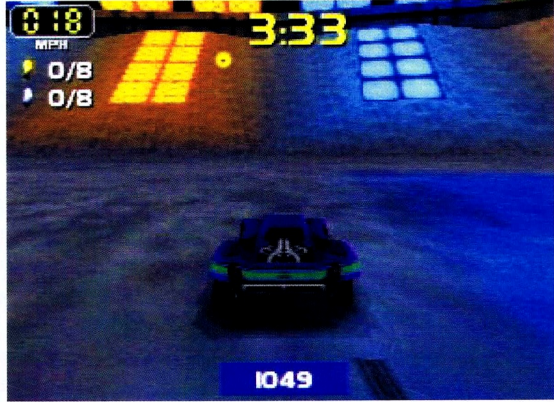


Dr Kitts,
In *Beetle Adventure Racing*, I've completed all the championships, got the police car and stuff like that, but there are only two cheats on the cheat menu. Where are the rest?
*David Spencer, Australia*

**Dr Kitts throws another prawn on Malibu Barbie.**
*You may not have noticed this, but there are flower boxes very well hidden on the levels. These only crop up in Championship Mode, mind, and there are three per level. You'll need to be very meticulous and observant to get the lot, and it'll take a lot of exploring. Find them all and the cheats are yours.*

*you want to make things hard on yourself, you can fill your garage with the secret vehicles by the following legitimate means…*

**GX-2**: Get 24 Gold Coins in Race Mode
**Mini XS**: 36 Gold Coins in Race Mode
**Locust LX**: Get all the silver coins in Race Mode
**Crusher**: Pick up at least 16 gold coins in Stunt Mode
**Euro LX**: 24 gold coins in Stunt Mode
**Venom**: All silver coins in Stunt Mode
**Panther**: Get all gold and silver coins in both race and Stunt Modes







Dr Kitts,
I've got all the boss remains, but can't get on the moon in *Majora's Mask*. I've helped Kafei but he doesn't show up at the Stock Pot Inn. What's going on?
*Pauandeep Purewal, Slough*

**Dr Kitts has almost had enough *Majora's Mask* for today, thanks.**
*You need to wait until the last minute of the third day and enter the clock tower when it opens up. Once at the top, play the Oath to Order and sit back. For Kafei to turn up, you need to have fulfilled all the criteria for the sub-quest, including delivering the Pendant to Anju and so on.*

Dr Kitts,
How do you get into the military base in *Body Harvest*?
*Barry J Blofeld, Coventry*

**Dr Kitts pulls the pin and counts "One elephant, two elephants…"**
*Simple. You'll see a military truck driving about. Follow it closely and you'll see that it goes into the base as part of its route. When the door to the base opens to let the truck in, just drive in.*

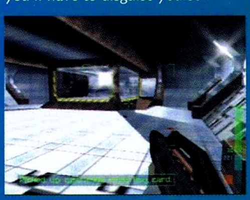
## PERFECT DARK

Dr Kitts,
On the Area 51: Rescue mission in *Perfect Dark*, I've got into the second lab, but I can't get in to rescue Elvis as the door is locked and I can't break the glass. Please help.
*Marcus Crocker, Surrey*

**Dr Kitts wants to hear you say "Way-oh". Way-oh!**



*Get into the lab and start killing everyone you find there. To get in, you'll have to disguise yourself.*



*Next, take a moment (not too long) to scour the bodies of the fallen guards. You'll find a key.*



*See that locked door on the right? Well, it's no longer locked. Get in there and the cutscene will kick in.*

## GOT A GAMING QUERY?

Doesn't matter how small or precise, write in to Dr Kitts for the answer. Detail your problem on the form below (use a separate piece of paper if necessary) and post it off to:

cut out and send

Name ..................................................

Address ..................................................

..................................................

..................................................

..................................................

..................................................

Postcode ..................................................

### GOOD AFTERNOON DOCTOR…

I've got this terrible gaming affliction – it's like this, you see…

## DOC KITTS

**Send to:** Dr Kitts' Game Clinic, **NGC** Magazine, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room.

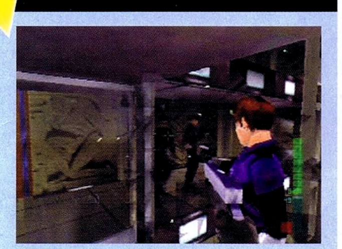
Developers versus us versus you

# I'M THE BEST

**Our leagues are livening up – send in your own times and scores and be a part of the action...**

**KEY TO THE LEAGUES**
- GOING UP
- GOING DOWN
- NON-MOVER
- NEW!

## STAR PERFORMANCE Gold



Forget developers and NGC staff members – all those red 'N's inside the I'm The Best leagues this month mean that high scores by you, the reader, are now flooding in. And no-one's racked up more table-topping times than London's own Tony Dunster. *GoldenEye*, *Mario Kart*, *PD*, *Zelda* – no game is safe from his tricky fingers. For his efforts, Tony is now the proud owner of a magical Mirage joypad – a gift from the kind folk at Wild Things (029 2075 5774, www.wild-things.co.uk) – and a Gold-level SP certificate. Go Tony! Go Tony! Ahem.

## STAR PERFORMANCE Silver

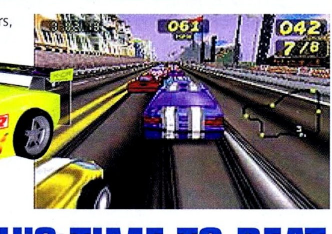


So, back in NGC/60, we thought Simon Mason's *WWF No Mercy* TKO time of just 12 seconds was 'neat stuff'. How quickly our opinions change. Ken Kristiansen from Formby has truly 'laid the smack down' on Monsieur Mason, delivering a TKO to a couple of his bewildered friends in just – get this – *six seconds*. We doubt Ken's mates are lining up to play against him after that godlike slice of gaming skill. Have a Silver Star Performance certificate for your rockin' rasslin, sir.

## STAR PERFORMANCE Bronze



Midway's recent *San Francisco Rush 2049* – a favourite game of ours, and a very special friend of Adrian Martin from Stafford. The young fella and his jaunty joypad skills have netted him a truly magnificent score of 11,954 on the game's brilliant Stunt Mode. Bronze Star Performance certificate, is it? Coming right up.



## BEAT THE DEVELOPER

Office wars! After Nik Bowen of Gameplay Studios topped a couple of our leagues in NGC/61, his apparently jealous colleague, Paul Dossis, has seized his N64 joypad and embarked on an incredible thunder-stealing mission. Nice to see I'm The Best fostering a healthy competitive spirit...

### What they've been playing

*Mario Kart 64* is Paul's bag, and his rocket-powered Royal Raceway and Luigi Raceway times have seen off a good few readers this month – including, in one gobsmacking instance, the near-invincible Tony Dunster. Only *you* can wipe the smile from the face of the man they're calling 'Paul Dossis' – send your new *Mario Kart* records to the address above, and we'll see how long that grin lasts.

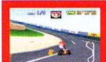


## THIS MONTH'S TIME TO BEAT

Chances are a good few of you have gone and spent your life savings on an import Japanese Gamecube – and by the time you read this, US Gamecubes will be available, too. So, for all you GC owners desperate to prove your gaming prowess, a *Luigi's Mansion* challenge is called for. Smug Greener's completed the game many times over, and fancies that his best cash total, 125,140,000G, is unbeatable. Go on – prove him wrong. You'll find a portrait of your best hanging on the wall of Dr Gad's gallery. The best score we hear of in time for NGC/64 wins a shiny new GC joypad.



**NGC/60's winner:** *Our Paper Mario challenge was given a good seeing to by David Rhodes of Edinburgh – 15 seconds on the ten 'Peach Panels'. One gloriously golden Mirage joypad from Wild Things is on its way to sunny Scotland.*



# MARIO KART 64

## BEST RACE TIMES




### MARIO RACEWAY

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:07'97 | Jess Walters | *Chesterfield* |
| 2 | 1:08'93 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 3 | 1:09'36 | Mark Green | NGC |
| 4 | 1:09'88 | Martin Kitts | *ex-*NGC |
| 5 | 1:11'42 | Geraint Evans | NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*On the bend before the hairpin with the giant mushroom, powerslide uphill and turn to face the wall on the other side. When you hit the track, use your mushroom and you'll fly over the wall.*




### KOOPA TROOPA BEACH

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:39'99 | Jess Walters | *Chesterfield* |
| 2 | 1:42'41 | Paul Dossis | *Gameplay Studios* |
| 3 | 1:42'55 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 4 | 1:51'66 | Tim Weaver | NGC |
| 5 | 1:54'12 | Geraint Evans | NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*Use your mushroom on the section which splits past the huge rock with the left and right arrows. This will give you added pace, but you'll have to use the hop to get through the normal shortcut.*




### ROYAL RACEWAY

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2:54'82 | Paul Dossis | *Gameplay Studios* |
| 2 | 3:00'96 | Jess Walters | *Chesterfield* |
| 3 | 3:03'21 | Mark Green | NGC |
| 4 | 3:08'72 | Tim Weaver | NGC |
| 5 | 3:09'01 | Gary Williams | *Cheltenham* |

**TOP TIP**

*Not any shortcuts to speak of here. Just make sure you get a powerslide boost on every corner and stay tight round the bends. You can also try powersliding over the grass before the big jump.*




### LUIGI RACEWAY

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:54'28 | Paul Dossis | *Gameplay Studios* |
| 2 | 1:56'16 | Jess Walters | *Chesterfield* |
| 3 | 2:06'43 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 4 | 2:09'02 | Geraint Evans | NGC |
| 5 | 2:15'54 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |

**TOP TIP**

*Always get as many boost slides as possible. You should be able to get at least three on each bend, especially the long sweeping bends, and at least two inside, and in the exit of, the tunnel.*

# PERFECT DARK

## BEST TIMES (AGENT MODE)



### DATADYNE: DEFECTION

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0:36 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 0:42 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |
| 3 | 0:44 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |
| 4 | 0:45 | Tim Weaver | NGC |
| 3 | 0:46 | Geraint Evans | NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*The best tactic is to just keep charging forward. Don't hang around to kill everyone and just move forward pumping lead into anything that gets in your way. Remember to reload constantly.*

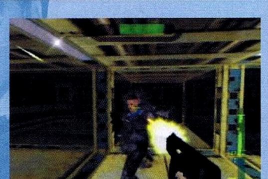


### CARRINGTON VILLA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:22 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 1:53 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |
| 3 | 1:54 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |
| 4 | 2:12 | Mark Green | NGC |
| 5 | 2:31 | Andrew Smith | *Acclaim* |

**TOP TIP**

*As with most missions, it's important to memorise the enemy position and level layout. It's also worth remembering the sniper positions so that you can take them out with little fuss.*



### G5 BUILDING

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:02 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 1:38 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |
| 3 | 3:27 | Andrew Smith | *Acclaim* |
| 4 | 3:28 | Tim Weaver | NGC |
| 5 | 3:35 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*Remember to use the CMP's Lock on function as soon as you pick one up. You don't want to waste time against those cloaking Datadyne personnel. Also, be sure to keep your cam-spy out of sight.*



### AREA 51: ESCAPE

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2:54 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 3:39 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |
| 3 | 3:41 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |
| 4 | 3:43 | Fred Williams | *Blitz Games* |
| 5 | 4:12 | Andrew Smith | *Acclaim* |

**TOP TIP**

*At the start, leg it to the corridor, ignoring everything else before tapping B at the top so that Elvis hovers after you. Then on in, it's a case of grabbing a Super Dragon for the quick kills.*

# GOLDENEYE 007

## BEST TIMES (AGENT MODE)




### FACILITY

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:01 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 1:12 | Jess Walters | *Chesterfield* |
| 3 | 1:20 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |
| 4 | 1:29 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |
| = | 1:29 | Mark Green | NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*There are large sections of this level you don't have to navigate at all. The only trouble you may have in terms of time wasting is Dr bleedin' Doak. If he's not in the labs, just abort and try again.*



### ARCHIVES

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0:20 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 0:22 | Jess Walters | *Chesterfield* |
| 3 | 0:33 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |
| 4 | 0:35 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |
| 5 | 0:37 | Gareth Richards | *Jester Interactive* |

**TOP TIP**

*Strafe for your life. The zig-zagging technique is essential here. Also, remember your ability to destroy crates. This will make killing any hiding guards a damn sight easier.*



### BUNKER 2

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0:32 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 0:39 | Jess Walters | *Chesterfield* |
| 3 | 0:46 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |
| 4 | 0:50 | Gareth Richards | *Jester Interactive* |
| 5 | 0:56 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*Get rid of surveillance equipment fast. Avoiding the shade wearing double-shooter guards will also save you loads of hassle. And using the windows in the doors will score you easy head shots.*



### TRAIN

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:51 | Jess Walters | *Chesterfield* |
| 2 | 1:55 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 3 | 2:45 | Chris Wade | *Grantham* |
| 4 | 2:50 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |
| 5 | 4:27 | Andrew Smith | *Acclaim* |

**TOP TIP**

*Memorise guard locations, stand your ground in the open and just blast them in their faces. Then speed through – the second you open the door to the main carriage, pump the room full of lead.*



# F-ZERO X

## BEST RACE TIMES




### MUTE CITY

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 01'26"736 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 01'33"159 | Daniel Howe | *Ayr* |
| 3 | 01'33"246 | Nik Bowen | *Gameplay Studios* |
| 4 | 01'35"450 | Mark Green | NGC |
| 5 | 01'49"521 | Martin Kitts | *ex-*NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*This course has four speed boosts. Memorise their locations so you hit them all. It's also a good idea to steadily pump your boost power to feel it's benefits for the duration. And approach the head of the pack early to avoid any traffic.*

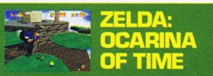



### DEATH RACE

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0'29"734 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 1'45"144 | Daniel Howe | *Ayr* |
| 3 | 2'16"250 | Nik Bowen | *Gameplay Studios* |
| = | 2'16"250 | Andrew Smith | *Acclaim* |
| 5 | 2'16"250 | Nik Bowen | *Gameplay Studios* |

**TOP TIP**

*The easiest ways to score kills is to knock ships off the track. Drive parallel to the ship you want to destroy, double-tap the relevant trigger and nudge the analogue towards them at the same time. Careful you don't spin off yourself, mind.*



# ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME

## BEST TIMES



### GERUDO EQUESTRIAN SHOOTING RANGE

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2000 | Tony Dunster | *London* |
| 2 | 1730 | Daniel Howe | *Ayr* |
| 3 | 1200 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |
| 4 | 1060 | Alan Troth | *Bits Studios* |
| = | 1060 | Mark Green | NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*Once you've got the gist of where everything is, concentrate on claiming as many bullseyes as possible (1000 points each). As they say, practice makes perfect.*



# BANJO-KAZOOIE

## BEST TIME (10 JIGGIES, 100 NOTES, 2 HONEYCOMBS)



### MUMBO'S MOUNTAIN

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 00:07:33 | Tim Weaver | NGC |
| 2 | 00:07:45 | Alan Maddrell | NGC |
| 3 | 00:08:20 | Steve Jalim | *ex-*NGC |
| 4 | 00:09:22 | Mark Green | NGC |
| 5 | 00:11:04 | Tim Weaver | NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*Head straight for Bottles to learn the talon trot (this way you move faster). Without Kazooie's help, you'll be hard-pushed to get all ten jiggies in a decent time.*

# SUPER MARIO 64

## BEST TIMES






### PRINCESS PEACH'S SLIDE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0'12"9 | Tony Dunster *London* |
| 2 | 0'16"6 | Metro Mustafa *Midway* |
| 3 | 0'18"3 | Mark Green NGC |
| 4 | 0'19"6 | Jim Ng Wing Keng *Bits Studios* |
| 5 | 0'19"8 | Alan Maddrell NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*To score under 20 seconds with ease use this shortcut. As you come out of the starting tunnel you'll come to a straight descent. Jump off to the left when you get to this section and try to land on the track below. It may take a little practice to master but it is possible – just make sure you press Z before you hit the track.*

### KOOPA RACE 1

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0'21"4 | Nik Bowen *Gameplay Studios* |
| 2 | 0'22"9 | Mark Green NGC |
| 3 | 0'25"1 | Geraint Evans NGC |
| 4 | 0'32"5 | Alan Maddrell NGC |
| 5 | 0'40"6 | Tim Weaver NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*Whatever you do don't use any of the warps, because you'll be cheating and you'll automatically lose. The best route is to take the main path. Make sure you use the Long Jump technique as much as possible as it is significantly faster than running. You should be aiming to get well under one minute if you can.*

# ZELDA MAJORA'S MASK

## BEST TIMES







### GORON RACES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:15:61 | Tom Demandt *Belgium* |
| 2 | 1:25:03 | Alan Maddrell NGC |
| 3 | 1:26:10 | Mark Green NGC |
| 4 | 1:30:15 | Geraint Evans NGC |
| 5 | 1:31:01 | Steve Jalim *ex-*NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*The main tactic here is to make absolutely sure you don't deviate from the inside line. If you can hold it all the way you'll get a great time. Also avoid hitting anything – it'll slow you down a treat. And make sure you never run low on Magic by collecting as many green bottles as you possibly can.*

### BEAVER RACE 2

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1:50 | Alan Maddrell NGC |
| 2 | 1:55 | Tim Weaver NGC |
| 3 | 1:57 | Steve Jalim *ex-*NGC |
| 4 | 1:58 | Mark Green NGC |
| 5 | 2:02 | Geraint Evans NGC |

**TOP TIP**

*This is very straightforward. It's worth remembering that the rings themselves will stall Link if he hits the rim, so always make sure you line yourself up as centrally as possible. Other than that, it's merely a case of memorising the layout and practising until your eyes bleed and you realised you've not eaten for 10 years.*

# HERE'S MY BEST TIME



cut out and send

**SUPER MARIO 64** — Best times
- Princess Peach's Slide ______
- Koopa Race 1 ______

**GOLDENEYE 007** — Best times (Agent)
- Facility ______
- Archives ______
- Bunker 2 ______
- Train ______

**MARIO KART** — Best race times
- Mario Raceway ______
- Koopa Troopa Beach ______
- Royal Raceway ______
- Luigi Raceway ______

**F-ZERO X** — Best race times
- Mute City ______
- Death race ______

**ZELDA MAJORA'S MASK** — Best times
- Goron Races ______
- Underwater Beaver Race 2 ______

**BANJO-KAZOOIE** — Mumbo's Mountain (10 jiggies, 100 notes, 2 honeycombs)
- Mumbo's Mountain ______

**ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME** — Best score
- Equestrian Shooting Range ______

**PERFECT DARK** — Best times (Agent mode)
- Datadyne: Defection ______
- Carrington Villa ______
- G5 Building ______
- Area 51: Escape ______

Name ..................................................

Address ..................................................

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Postcode ..................................................

You must include **VIDEO EVIDENCE OF YOUR ENTIRE ATTEMPT** for it to be accepted (see Skill Club Millennium 2001 if you're not sure how to do this). Tapes MUST have a label attached, with your name, address and score/time easily legible or they will be thrown into our big pit of despair.

If you'd like to have your video back, please include a stamped, addressed envelope (with the correct number of stamps) and we'll promise to do our best to return them to you.

And remember, each issue of the mag has to be completed far earlier than you could ever imagine, so don't fret if your entry doesn't appear in the issue after you put your stuff in the post – it'll be there in the next one. So, pack up your bits and send them all to: **I'm the Best, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.**

Challenges to test the best

# GAME ON

## READERS' CHALLENGES

Right then, folks. Time once again to clean out that sweat and dust-encrusted analogue stick and exercise those fingers. This month we've picked out four of the best reader challenges from your most played titles, as well as eight spanking new tests of skill for the classic *Mario Kart 64*.

The office lunchtime favourite has made something of an unexpected resurgence in the charts in these Gamecube-preoccupied times – so to celebrate the fact that hundreds of you are still lapping up this feisty racer, we thought we'd spend some time coming up with new tricks and top times to test the best. So if you're not one of the lucky new adopters of *MK*, dig out that cart (shame on you) and hone your powersliding prowess once more. Enjoy.

### STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON



TOP CHALLENGE

**Devon**'s own **Kyle O'Hea** brings us the first challenge this month in the shape of a nifty *Rogue Squadron* number. Head to the level select and choose Assault on Kyle 2. Now select the Y-Wing as your craft of choice and start the game. Your task is to hunt down, bomb and obliterate your Y-Wing-flying (former) comrades before they disappear – but there's a catch just to make it even trickier. If you get hit, even once, it's game over. Nasty.

**Kyle's Best: 10 Y-Wings**

### ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK




For **Ian Anderson** from **Co. Antrim**'s challenge you will need the Fierce Deity's Mask, and a stopwatch. First make your way to the southern swamp and then head for Woodfall temple. Once you get there, warp to the boss room to fight Odolwa. Stick the mask on and time how long it takes you to beat the big guy. Start your stopwatch the second the cut-scene ends – we suggest you get a mate to do this bit, just to make sure it's all done fair and square.

**Ian's Best: 6 seconds**

### SUPER SMASH BROS




**David Press** from **Bristol** brings us this rather tasty little *Smash Brothers* challenge. To set it all up, go to the item switch menu and set the appearance of Pokéballs to 'Very High', making sure that they're also the only items available. Now start up a versus battle with a level one CPU opponent and see how many *different* Pokémon you can release in two minutes. We recommend using a fast character and a small arena to obtain the best results.

**David's Best: 11**

### CONKER'S BAD FUR DAY




Thanks to **Deane Perry** from **Norfolk** for this challenge. Start a two-player, ten-minute deathmatch on the colours map with the maximum inbred sims allowed. The object of the game is to test your superior sniping powers against your mate, by killing as many of the sims as possible. You're not allowed to shoot each other, so it's all down to hunting bots – with the object being to get as hefty a winning margin over your competitor as possible.

**Deane's Best: 15 kills.**

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

## GAME ON

### CHALLENGES WANTED!

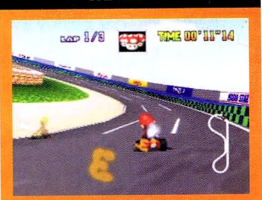
As well as all the usual games, we're particularly interested in challenges for...
**Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 • Pokémon Stadium 2 • Paper Mario • Star Wars: Battle for Naboo • Conker's Bad Fur Day**
We'll print the best of them right here, and what's more, the top challenge each month wins an Action Replay cart from Datel (01785 810826, www.codejunkies.co.uk). Can't say fairer than that.

**Send your challenges to:**
**Game On, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW**

ACTION REPLAY PROFESSIONAL

# TEAM CHALLENGES MARIO KART 64

## POWER SLIDE MASTER



The premise for this is dead simple. Start a time trial on Luigi's Raceway with the character of your choice. The challenge is to get in as many power slide boosts as possible on your first lap. However, if you come off the road you'll have to start again. If you spin out or hit any obstacles – including the tunnel wall – you'll have to start again. Oh, and if you take your finger off the accelerator, you'll have to start again. We suggest hugging the outside of the track. Good luck.

**Geraint's best: 14**

## BANSHEE TRIAL



Like something out of Geraint's worst nightmares (he *really* sucks on this course), we want you to turn in your best time for Banshee Boardwalk. As far as tips are concerned, look out for the double 90° turns which can be taken with one powerslide. Also, learn to shave off milliseconds on each bend by hopping over the inside gap on each corner. You can also try using a mushroom-and-hop combo on the huge hole in the bat's chamber. Tricky yes, but not impossible.

**Tim's best: 1.57:52**

## WEAPONS MASTER



Start a single-player race on Wario Stadium with the character of your choice. Your task is to try and hit any opponent with *every* possible weapon as quickly as you can. If you finish all three laps without completing the task, you've failed. The trick with this one is to start way off the pace – in order to get the rarer weapons early on – before moving up the pack. If you find this too easy, why not try upping the CC class for an even mightier *Mario Kart* challenge?

**Mark's best: Lap 2**

## LONG JUMP TRIALS



Start a two-player race on Koopa Troopa Beach. Both players must turn around and seek out a mushroom of any kind before heading to the big jump over the mossy rock and agreeing on a starting point. Using your 'shroom try and leap as far as you can. The minute you leave the jump hold down the brake and don't accelerate. Stay where you are so the second player can compare their jump. See who can get the most consecutive victories.

**Mark's best: 8 victories**

## SNOWMAN SMASH



On Frappe Snowland, start a two-player race so you can spend as much time as you like trying this challenge. Basically, all you need to do is get hold of a star and then head for the open area with all the snowmen sitting in it. Now activate the power-up and see how many snowmen you can smash to pieces before the star runs out. The best tactic with this one is not to go too fast, and plan your route in advance so you don't waste any time milling about.

**Geraint's best: 11 snowmen**

## HOME TURF



After repeated lunchtimes racing the hallways of Bowser's Castle, we've honed our skills to perfection. Alan, on the other hand, plays like a chump, but when he opted for hulking brute Bowser for the castle grudge match he turned in something of a monster (sorry) race. If you can beat his fluke-tastic timage you'll get kudos from us – and possibly a punch in the face from the Maddrell himself. What more could you ask for? So, fastest race time with Bowser it is, then.

**Alan's best: 2.06:34**

## PACE CAR CHALLENGE



This one is *very* tough. Choose a track you're confident on and make sure you get a boost start, taking you to the head of the pack. From here on, you have to try to win the race without giving up first place. In order to do this successfully you'll have to race perfectly, and hope the opposition don't smack you about. No one in the office has managed it so far, but Tim did get very close – being overtaken on the final bend of Royal Raceway before taking the lead on the last straight.

**Tim's best: Overtaken once**

## BLOCK FORT DUEL



Choose a two-player battle and head for top of one of the block forts. At the top, split up across the long bridge spanning the gap between two forts, then grab power-ups until you both have triple green shells. Now, without activating them, head for the middle of the bridge and, from a back-to-back position, drive to opposite ends and spin to face each other before blasting your shells. See how many consecutive victories you can achieve.

**Alan's best: 9 victories**




# SKILL CLUB NEXT GEN

## It's new and improved – and now you can win a six-month subscription to NGC!

Yup, the shiny new Skill Club gauntlet has been well and truly slapped on the table with a damp 'thunk' sound, prompting a flurry of competent Bronze and Silver entries. Well done you lot – you are worthy foot-soldiers to the cause indeed, for even the mightiest general will be crushed by the foe if his troops are naught but an oafish rabble of scamps, urchins and knaves. Or something.

**We're holding out for a hero…**

Thing is, the coveted platinum pedestal still stands vacant. Moss and weeds spring through its cracked surface, and the nation mourns the absence of a great leader, a hero of such calibre that they can complete a full-on 14 tasks – two more than sweaty Greek demigod Hercules!

**Let slip the dogs of war!**

Of course, tasks reap rewards. The more tasks completed, the greater the reward – but material gain is nothing compared to the spiritual elation of seeing your name carved in lights *(is this right? – Ed)* on the hallowed parchment of page 78. Three challenges bag you a Skill Club Bronze certificate and take pride of place in our Bronze league. It's seven for Silver recognition, ten for a Gold certificate and a Gamester Advanced Controller (or a Gamester Tremor Pak with 1Mb memory). Reckon you can finish all 20? Ha! We'll talk money when we see proof…

## the rules

- *You need to accomplish three challenges to earn yourself a Bronze placing, seven for Silver, ten for Gold and 14 for Platinum. And if you manage all 20, we'll send you something extra special…*
- *You can enter whichever challenges you like – it is entirely up to you.*
- *You can use either PAL (UK or Australian) or NTSC (US or Japanese) copies of the games featured here, but if you opt for NTSC you'll have to achieve the faster of the two listed times for Mario Kart.*
- *Each challenge entered must be accompanied by photographic or video proof.*
- *We know how to recognise the influence of cheat carts and codes, as well as doctored digital camera shots. Offenders will be held up to ritual humiliation and stoned out of the country by zealous citizens.*
- *You can enter the leagues in stages if you wish. Make it into the Bronze league first, then later you can send us further proof to elevate yourself to a loftier position. Bonzer.*
- *Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum leagues will be published in a future edition of NGC.*
- *If you'd like to have your tapes or photographs back, please include a stamped, addressed envelope.*

## HOW TO… prove your achievements

### Taking photographs

*Point at the screen and click away. For best results, turn off or cover up the flash (it will reflect off the screen), draw the curtains and use a fast film – 200 or, best of all, 400 ASA. With a digicam, use a slow shutter speed.*

### Taking videos

1. *Take the lead that connects your N64 to your TV and plug it into the 'Signal In' socket on the back of your video recorder.*
2. *Connect the 'Signal Out' socket on your video to your TV and turn both on.*
3. *Switch your TV to the video channel and switch on your N64 with a game plugged into it.*
4. *Find a spare channel on the video's tuning mechanism and look for the N64 signal. Save the setting.*
5. *Complete your challenge and get to the appropriate result screen.*
6. *Pop in a tape and press 'Record'. Press 'Stop' after five or so seconds.*
7. *Repeat steps 5 and 6 according to the number of challenges you're attempting.*
8. *Rewind the tape to the beginning of your evidence (so we can see your scores quickly and easily). And that's about it.*



## Hello there,

I'd like to put myself forward for the Bronze/Silver/Gold/Platinum Skill Club Next Gen league. I've gone and included proof of my achievements in:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | A | F-Zero X | | K | Majora's Mask |
| | B | ISS 2000 | | L | GoldenEye 007 |
| | C | Battle for Naboo | | M | Perfect Dark |
| | D | Super Mario 64 | | N | Banjo-Tooie |
| | E | Conker's BFD | | O | Tony Hawk's |
| | F | Lylat Wars | | P | Mario Tennis |
| | G | Quake II | | Q | TWINE |
| | H | Wave Race 64 | | R | WWF No Mercy |
| | I | Ridge Racer 64 | | S | Smash Bros |
| | J | Mario Kart 64 | | T | Excitebike 64 |

# ENTRY FORM

Please send my badge and certificate to:

**Name** ......................................................

**Address** ......................................................

......................................................

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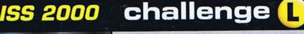
......................................................

*Use a photocopy of this form if you'd rather not cut your copy of NGC Magazine.*

## challenge A — F-Zero X

***What you must do:*** Beat a time of 1'50" on Port Town 2.
***Proof:*** A photo of your time, shown on the info screen after the race.
***Helpful tips:*** The free Double Game Guide+ stuck to issue 22 should provide you with all the help you need.

## challenge B — ISS 2000



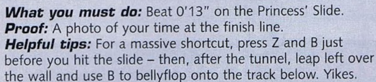
***What you must do:*** Finish all the scenarios.
***Proof:*** A photo of the two completed Scenario screens.
***Helpful tips:*** Tips ahoy in the DGG+ attached to issue 49, *and* the 'Best of 2000' book that came free with issue 51.

## challenge C — Battle for Naboo



***What you must do:*** Earn Gold Medals on all 18 levels – that includes the three secret missions.
***Proof:*** A photo of the player select screen, showing how many medals you've collected.
***Helpful tips:*** Why, there was a DGG+ free with **N64**/57.

## challenge D — Super Mario 64



***What you must do:*** Beat 0'13" on the Princess' Slide.
***Proof:*** A photo of your time at the finish line.
***Helpful tips:*** For a massive shortcut, press Z and B just before you hit the slide – then, after the tunnel, leap left over the wall and use B to bellyflop onto the track below. Yikes.

## challenge E — Conker's Bad Fur Day



***What you must do:*** Score 10 headshots against CPU-controlled Frenchies in the Beach multiplayer scenario.
***Proof:*** A photo of the final stats screen, showing your score.
***Helpful tips:*** No multiplayer tips as such, but try the walkthroughs in issues 54 and 55 for general advice.

## challenge F — Lylat Wars





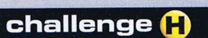
***What you must do:*** All rings and 70 hits on the Training mode, *before* entering the all-range mode arena.
***Proof:*** Pause the game as you pass through the final ring and take a photo.
***Helpful tips:*** **N64**/8's free poster, or the DGG+ on issue 13.

## challenge G — Quake II



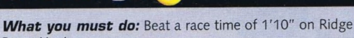
***What you must do:*** Beat 1'10" on Twists.
***Proof:*** A photo of the stats screen, please, which pops up as soon as you finish the level.
***Helpful tips:*** All manner of tips are to be found in **N64**/33.

## challenge H — Wave Race 64

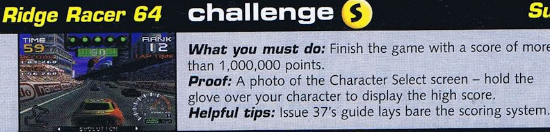


***What you must do:*** Beat a score of 66,000 on Stunt Mode at Dolphin Park.
***Proof:*** A photo of the stats screen, showing your score.
***Helpful tips:*** **N64**/2's your man, along with the torrent of tips featured in the DGG+ stuck to the front of issue 14.

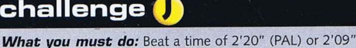
## challenge I — Ridge Racer 64



***What you must do:*** Beat a race time of 1'10" on Ridge Racer Novice.
***Proof:*** A photo of the records screen.
***Helpful tips:*** Mark demonstrated the perfect Ridge Racer Novice lap in **N64**/41. Get to it!



## challenge J — Mario Kart 64





***What you must do:*** Beat a time of 2'20" (PAL) or 2'09" (NTSC) on Bowser's Castle.
***Proof:*** A picture of the records screen, showing your time.
***Helpful tips:*** Try the unnervingly helpful review in issue 4, the tips in issue 5, or the DGG+ attached to issue 13.

## challenge K — Zelda: Majora's Mask



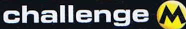
***What you must do:*** Win the Fierce Deity's mask – by collecting all the other masks, then finishing the game.
***Proof:*** An in-game photo, showing Link in Fierce Deity form (you'll need to be in a boss arena).
***Helpful tips:*** A handy book on **N64**/50, and tips in issue 52.

## challenge L — GoldenEye 007



***What you must do:*** Survive the Cradle on 00 Agent difficulty for 15 minutes.
***Proof:*** A photo of the Mission Complete screen, clearly showing your time.
***Helpful tips:*** Tips in **N64**/10, plus the DGG+ from issue 12.

## challenge M — Perfect Dark







***What you must do:*** Unlock all the cheats. That's a grand total of 43 cheats for you to collect…
***Proof:*** Photographs of all the cheat menus – six in all.
***Helpful tips:*** Tips in issues 44, 45 and 46, and the book that came bundled with issue 46.

## challenge N — Banjo-Tooie





***What you must do:*** Collect all 90 jiggies.
***Proof:*** A photo of the information contained in the game's pause screen.
***Helpful tips:*** Everything you need to know is wrapped up in the book given away free with issue 55.

## challenge O — Tony Hawk's Skateboarding



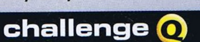
***What you must do:*** Unlock Officer Dick by collecting all thirty tapes and winning every medal.
***Proof:*** A photo of *Tony*'s Character Select screen with Dick clearly visible.
***Helpful tips:*** Alan fashioned a full guide in **N64**/42.

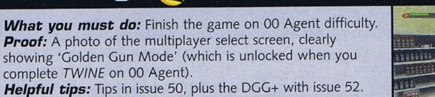
## challenge P — Mario Tennis



***What you must do:*** Complete the horrifyingly difficult Planet Cup with all 16 characters.
***Proof:*** A photo of the Player Select screen showing the CPU difficulty as 'Intense' (unlocked after doing the challenge.)
***Helpful tips:*** Check out Dr Kitts' DGG+, as seen on issue 48.

## challenge Q — The World is Not Enough





***What you must do:*** Finish the game on 00 Agent difficulty.
***Proof:*** A photo of the multiplayer select screen, clearly showing 'Golden Gun Mode' (which is unlocked when you complete *TWINE* on 00 Agent).
***Helpful tips:*** Tips in issue 50, plus the DGG+ with issue 52.

## challenge R — WWF No Mercy





***What you must do:*** Defeat at least 100 opponents in Survival mode.
***Proof:*** A photo of the final stats screen, showing your wins.
***Helpful tips:*** A splendid tips guide in issue 50, and the DGG+ taped to the cover of **N64**/52.

## challenge S — Super Smash Bros

***What you must do:*** Finish the game with a score of more than 1,000,000 points.
***Proof:*** A photo of the Character Select screen – hold the glove over your character to display the high score.
***Helpful tips:*** Issue 37's guide lays bare the scoring system.

## challenge T — Excitebike 64



***What you must do:*** Unlock *Excite-3D* – which is done by winning the final Challenge Pro championship.
***Proof:*** A photo of the Special Tracks Select screen.
***Helpful tips:*** Stuck to the front of issue 57 was a DGG+ overflowing with *Excitebike 64* tippery.

# HALL OF FAME

## PLATINUM Club
complete 14 challenges

No entries yet! Your name could be here...

## GOLD Club
complete 10 challenges

| | |
|---|---|
| **Jamie Hobbs**, *Thetford* | *D, E, F, J, K, L, M, N, P, S* |

## SILVER Club
complete 7 challenges

| | |
|---|---|
| **Arif Mollah**, *Rochdale* | *C, D, J, K, L, M, Q* |
| **Demot Ryan**, *Co. Westmeath* | *E, F, K, L, M, N, S* |
| **Chris Lowe**, *Tyne & Wear* | *C, E, F, I, K, L, Q* |
| **Joseph Murphy**, *Co. Cork* | *B, E, F, I, K, L, N, S, T* |
| **Giorgio Venturino**, *Turin* | *E, F, I, K, L, N, S* |

## BRONZE Club
complete 3 challenges or more

| | |
|---|---|
| **Chris Smith**, *Leeds* | *E,P,R* |
| **Michael Rose**, *Netherlands* | *C,L,S* |
| **Patrick King**, *Norwich* | *C,P,R* |
| **James Talbot-Hammond**, *Nantwich* | *C,Q,R* |
| **Janne Kaitila**, *Edinburgh* | *C,N,S* |
| **Thomas Barrett**, *East Kilbride* | *N,P,S* |
| **Nader Kohbodi**, *Newport* | *E,L,S* |
| **Andrew Duffy**, *Ayrshire* | *C,K,S* |
| **Peter Shrubsall**, *Surrey* | *B,P,S* |
| **Alex McIve**, *Lanarkshire* | *G,R,S* |
| **Mark Quayle**, *Australia* | *C,H,L* |
| **Luke Wilson**, *Dublin* | *N,P,S* |
| **David Cathrine**, *London* | *L,R,S* |
| **Michael Oakes**, *Harpenden* | *E,L,T* |
| **Tony Dunster**, *Anglesey* | *B,P,S* |
| **Guy Taylor**, *Kingston-upon-Thames* | *C,L,S* |
| **Gary Brawn**, *Bromley* | *H,N,P* |
| **James Firman**, *St Albans* | *K,L,S* |
| **The Nameless One**, *Australia* | *C,N,R* |
| **Damien Plumb**, *Essex* | *L,N,O* |
| **Alexander Davies**, *Newport Pagnell* | *L,S,T* |
| **Colin White**, *Derbyshire* | *F,K,N,S* |
| **Johan Lubbers**, *Netherlands* | *E,K,N* |
| **Bruce Thomson**, *Edinburgh* | *A,J,Q* |
| **Andrew Foster**, *Ilkley* | *K,L,P* |
| **Joe Sullivan**, *Isle of Wight* | *E,L,P* |



NGC's ultimate buying guide

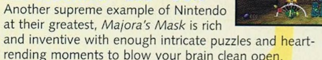
# DIRECTORY

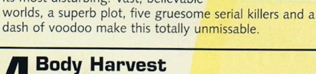
## The experts at NGC reveal the N64 games you should be splashing out on



## NGC TOP 10 ACTION ADVENTURE GAMES

**1 Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time**
**Nintendo • £50 • 98%**
Simply the greatest game ever created on *any* format, *Ocarina of Time* is a game so full of majestic, jaw-dropping moments it'll probably bring you to tears. Absolute genius.

**2 Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask**
**Nintendo • £50 • 96%**

Another supreme example of Nintendo at their greatest, *Majora's Mask* is rich and inventive with enough intricate puzzles and heart-rending moments to blow your brain clean open.

**3 Shadowman**
**Acclaim • £40 • 93%**

As black as the night, *Shadowman* is grisly adventuring at its most disturbing. Vast, believable worlds, a superb plot, five gruesome serial killers and a dash of voodoo make this totally unmissable.

**4 Body Harvest**
**Infogrames • £20 • 91%**
Crap-looking but ultra-playable shooter.

**5 Resident Evil 2**
**Virgin • £40 • 90%**
Super-scary, if short-lived, zombie finery.

**6 Duke Nukem: Zero Hour**
**Infogrames • £40 • 90%**
Violent, enjoyable third-person blasting.

**7 Star Wars: Rogue Squadron**
**Nintendo • £40 • 85%**
Tremendously good space combat fun.

**8 Operation Winback**
**Virgin • £40 • 83%**
Looks ropey, but this is top stealth action.

**9 Hybrid Heaven**
**Konami • £40 • 83%**
Niggly sci-fi RPG with ingenious battle system.

**10 Star Wars: Battle for Naboo**
**THQ • £40 • 78%**
Not perfect, but a tasty space shooter.

## NGC TOP 10 SHOOT-'EM-UPS

**1 Perfect Dark**
**Rare • £50 • 96%**
Absolutely stunning *GoldenEye* sequel that offers unprecedented replay value thanks to reams of multiplayer options and a rock hard one-player mode. Buy it immediately or risk missing out on a classic.

**2 GoldenEye 007**
**Rare • £30 • 94%**
Four years on, this is still a work of unparalleled beauty, combining a delicious Bond license with brilliant level design, destructible scenery and a revolutionary multiplayer game. We still play it every day even now.

**3 Turok**
**Acclaim • £30 • 91%**
Screen-filling dinosaurs, ludicrous levels of bloody violence and some of the most staggering weapons this side of the H-Bomb, *Turok* still looks and plays like the sweeping classic it undoubtedly is.

**4 Turok 2**
**Acclaim • £40 • 95%**
Gorgeously playable, if flawed, dino-blaster.

**5 Lylat Wars**
**Nintendo • £30 • 91%**
Miyamoto-influenced space shoot-'em-up. Yum.

**6 Jet Force Gemini**
**Rare • £40 • 93%**
Ace looks, hectic blasting, guts all over the shop.

**7 Quake II**
**Activision • £40 • 90%**
Surprisingly ace multiplayer action. 'Chekkit'.

**8 The World is Not Enough**
**EA • £40 • 88%**
Annoying but enjoyably action-packed Bondage.

**9 Rainbow Six**
**Take 2 • £40 • 87%**
Short-lived but complex stealth-'em-up. Beaut.

**10 Turok: Rage Wars**
**Acclaim • £40 • 87%**
Deathmatch-based blasting that works a treat.

## NGC TOP 10 BEAT-'EM-UPS

**1 Super Smash Bros**
**Nintendo • £40 • 90%**
Immaculate, beautifully playable, multi-platformed fighting game with Nintendo characters beating the living daylights out of each other. Nab three mates and it gets even better.

**2 WWF No Mercy**
**THQ • £40 • 92%**
The biggest and best rasslin' game ever made, improving on its predecessors by upping the pace, moves, options and violence. You can even scrap it out in the dressing rooms.

**3 Fighters Destiny**
**Infogrames • £40 • 86%**
Gorgeous animation, likeable characters (including a cow) and bone-shattering moves make this a worthy contender to the likes of *Tekken*. Go forth, kick people, and crush skulls.

**4 WWF Wrestlemania 2000**
**THQ • £40 • 90%**
Playable, comprehensive, fat-man fighting.

**5 WWF Attitude**
**Acclaim • £40 • 88%**
Hi-res, combo-led ring sting. Get amongst it.

**6 Mortal Kombat 4**
**Infogrames • £40 • 84%**
Rip off someone's leg and beat 'em to death with it.

**7 Xena: Warrior Princess**
**Titus • £40 • 81%**
Surprisingly good four-player prang-'em-up.

**8 Rakuga Kids**
**Konami • £40 • 80%**
Weird but great 2D graffiti beat-'em-up.

**9 Bio Freaks**
**Infogrames • £40 • 76%**
Gorgeous and bloody, if a little shallow.

**10 WCW/NWO Revenge**
**THQ • £40 • £75%**
Shuffling, slow fighters, plenty of moves.

## NGC TOP 10 PLATFORM GAMES



**1 Super Mario 64**
**Nintendo • £30 • 96%**
The sort of game that'll have you thanking your Mum she gave birth to you: a vast, magnificent spectacle, refined down to the most intricate detail, *Mario 64* is *still* breathtaking.



**2 Donkey Kong 64**
**Rare • £60 (with Expansion Pak) • 93%**
It's *Banjo-Kazooie+*, but who cares? An absolutely awesome platformer, combining massive exploration with eye-frazzling visuals and some likeable, if frightening, characters.



**3 Rocket: Robot on Wheels**
**Ubi Soft • £40 • 88%**
The most original, inventive, downright playable platformer you'll encounter in a long, long time, *Rocket* just gets better the more you play it. If you can find a copy, snap it up now.

**4 Banjo-Kazooie**
**Rare • £40 • 92%**
Rare's platform mastery strikes again. 'Wick'.

**5 Mystical Ninja featuring Goemon**
**Konami • £40 • 90%**
Sprawling, enjoyable, ker-razy adventure.

**6 Conker's Bad Fur Day**
**Rare • £40 • 89%**
Swearing, wazzing, platforming. What a combo.

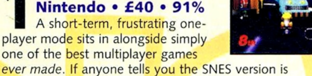
**7 Yoshi's Story**
**Nintendo • £40 • 86%**
Not a lot of longevity, but superbly playable.

**8 Banjo-Tooie**
**Rare • £45 • 81%**
Old hat, but still huge and fabulously good fun.

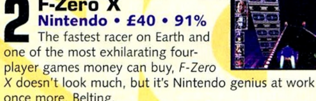
**9 Mischief Makers**
**Nintendo • £40 • 90%**
Retro-tastic 2D level-hopping brilliance.

**10 Glover**
**Hasbro • £40 • 83%**
Sold all of two copies, but this is superbly odd.

## NGC TOP 10 RACING GAMES



**1 Mario Kart 64**
**Nintendo • £40 • 91%**
A short-term, frustrating one-player mode sits in alongside simply one of the best multiplayer games *ever made*. If anyone tells you the SNES version is better, hit them hard in the face until they faint.



**2 F-Zero X**
**Nintendo • £40 • 91%**
The fastest racer on Earth and one of the most exhilarating four-player games money can buy, *F-Zero X* doesn't look much, but it's Nintendo genius at work once more. Belting.

**3 Ridge Racer 64**
**Nintendo • £40 • 91%**
Stunning compilation of the PlayStation games, topped off with some exclusive N64 extras, and a wealth of blistering motors. Worth buying for the time trial mode alone.

**4 Diddy Kong Racing**
**Rare • £40 • 90%**
A fantastic adventure-racer, but not quite *MK64*.

**5 World Driver Championship**
**Midway • £40 • 91%**
Rock hard but utterly superb. And *so* gorgeous.

**6 Top Gear Rally 2**
**Kemco • £40 • 90%**
Brilliant rally game with a random track generator.

**7 V-Rally 99**
**Infogrames • £40 • 90%**
Fast, furious, terrific rallying, but bleedin' frustrating.

**8 Top Gear Rally**
**Boss • £40 • 86%**
Looks dump, but this is quick, realistic racing action.

**9 Wipeout 64**
**Psygnosis • £40 • 88%**
Hard but rewarding *F-Zero* alternative. Great music.

**10 Beetle Adventure Racing**
**EA • £40 • 81%**
Tons of shortcuts make this a decent outside bet.

## NGC TOP 10 SPORTS GAMES

**1 ISS '98**
**Konami • £40 • 92%**
Everything that makes football so wonderful squeezed into a cartridge smaller than a Predator boot, *ISS '98* is a majestic, nigh-on-flawless recreation of The Beautiful Game.

**2 Mario Tennis**
**Nintendo • £40 • 91%**
It's Mario, it's tennis, it's absolutely gobsmackingly ace. Like *Super Tennis* on the SNES before it, this is a supreme example of racket and ball that you simply cannot afford to go without.



**3 Wave Race 64**
**Nintendo • £40 • 90%**
It might be as old as the hills, but still nothing has managed to replicate the feeling of pelting across water at skin-melting speeds as well as *Wave Race*. An absolute joy, this still looks tip top too.

**4 1080° Snowboarding**
**Nintendo • £40 • 89%**
Takes a while to get into, but this is champion.

**5 Mario Golf**
**Nintendo • £40 • 90%**
Don't like golf? You will now – thwack!

**6 Excitebike 64**
**Nintendo • £45 • 90%**
Delicious handling, top tracks, plus a heap of extras.

**7 F1 World Grand Prix**
**Nintendo • £40 • 93%**
Astonishingly realistic and visually stunning.

**8 Tony Hawk's Skateboarding**
**Activision • £40 • 86%**
Remarkably playable bumpin' and grindin'.

**9 International Track & Field 2000**
**Konami • £40 • 86%**
Impressive update of classic button-basher.

**10 Michael Owen's WLS 2000**
**THQ • £40 • 84%**
Silky smooth, goal-drenched football game.

## NGC TOP 5 MISCELLANEOUS GAMES



**1 Pilotwings 64**
**Nin. • £30 • 89%**
Wonderfully innovative flight sim. Remarkable for two reasons: you dictate want you want to do and where, and it's even better now than before.



**2 Pokémon Stadium 2**
**Nin. • £50 • 90%**
Battle all the *Red*, *Blue*, *Gold* and *Silver* Pokémon in ace 3D. Infinite replayability and a bundle of smart minigames.



**3 Paper Mario**
**Nin. • £40 • 90%**
A 'true' RPG – despite appearances – *Paper Mario* is relatively simple but huge and amusing, and as inventive and engrossing as any Big N game.



**4 Blast Corps**
**Rare • £30 • 88%**
Startlingly original and thoroughly enjoyable, everyone forgot about Rare's first N64 game. Our advice? Get yourself reacquainted.



**5 Pokémon Puzzle League**
**Nin. • £40 • 89%**
Top notch tile-matching Poképuzzler.



You write, we answer

# MAILBOX

## CONTACT US!

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Text message: 07764 175921
Write: Mailbox @ NGC Magazine

STAR LETTER NGC

### 'GRAVE CONCERNS'

I have grave concerns about the lack of subtitles and captions for Gamecube games. I am a deaf hardcore gamer, one of around four and a half million people who are deaf or hard of hearing in the UK. There is a growing trend for using speech instead of text to follow the plot in games, and I strongly feel that game developers don't give a damn about the deaf and hard of hearing.
**Niall Rattansi, via email**




*A very fair point. Some GC developers, Nintendo included, are sticking with text, while others – such as Rare – include subtitles, but the majority don't cater for the deaf or hard of hearing. We'll have more on this next month.* **Ed**



*Phantasy Star Online v2 will be online – but will Nintendo's own titles follow suit?*

### 'ONLINE PLAY'

I wish Nintendo would welcome online play with open arms. Take *Perfect Dark* – at first, I was amazed by the enemy's intelligence, but after two hours I'd had enough. Imagine it online, with enemies behaving in unpredictable ways and forcing you to come up with new strategies. I wonder if the modem will actually be released – it wouldn't be the first bit of Nintendo kit never to see the light of day.
**Gabriel Knox-Carter, Wirral**

*The phrase that pays at Nintendo is 'wait and see'. Sega's* Phantasy Star Online *will be net-ready in Japan in March – and The Big N will be watching it carefully. If it makes the Sonic boys a pot of cash, expect Shigsy and co to rub their hands and dive in with their own titles.* **Ed**

### 'SIGN-MAKING COMPANY'

In response to Paul Weedon's letter in NGC/60 about Appleton World of Signs – the company that used a picture of Mario on their vans – I've discovered that they're a sign-making company. *(Really? – Ed)* I'm not all that sure what Mario has to do with them, though.
**Neil Emmett, Norwich**

*But we do! Neil forwarded Appleton's internet address, and the mystery was solved. The company was responsible for decorating huge articulated trucks that Nintendo UK used on a tour back in '99. Read the full fascinating story*

## TXT US

**Use modern technology to get us on the move...**

NGC 07764 175921

wat happnd 2 corection corna in 61?art monkeys again?xxggirl

i h8 nu zlda i h8 nu zlda i h8 nu zlda ian

wheres kittsy gone?

paul my m8 fancies u she sez ur hairs luvly!!!

ill cry if i dont win the luigi competition. frm scott

my ch*****g mum sez no GC for xmas.

it took lnger to type this txt than it took me 2 fnsh luigis mansion. chris

can u give me shigsys mobile no? i want to txt him!! tom




GERBER SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTS

– including scintillating details on Appleton's three 48" EmbossTrack friction-feed plotters – at http://www.appletonsigns.co.uk/gerber.html. **Ed**

## 'I LOVE GBC'

I am writing to congratulate Nintendo on the Game Boy. My five-year-old son loves his dearly and takes it everywhere, so when he fell into the swimming pool on holiday, we explained to him that it was unlikely to survive. But the GB not only lived – the game was paused at the exact moment it had received its soaking.
**N. J. Kinnock, no address**

*Gawd bless that little handheld miracle. We're already testing our Gamecube to destruction – Greener's shredded, bleeding hands are a testament to the joypad's durability. And they nicely match his face after I kicked it in.* **Ed**

Buy a Shark Light if you want to use your GBA fewer than three metres away from a nuclear explosion.

## 'I HATE GBA'

When I heard Nintendo defending their GBA's dark screen, claiming that a backlight would have meant a bigger, more expensive machine with a shorter battery life, I was convinced. But it's proved *vital* to buy an add-on bulb to see the blasted screen, effectively pushing up the price, making the GBA heavier, and draining batteries faster. We're right back where we started.
**Aaron Robinson, via email**

*Yep. Shigsy's claimed the problem can be fixed by developers using only the brightest colours in the GBA's palette – time will tell. In the meantime, you could try moving closer to sunlight. Try Mercury.* **Ed**

What a GBC might look like three metres away from a nuclear explosion.

## 'BORN TO PLAY'

I was flicking through Rolling Stone magazine when I found this ad. Cool or what? Much more trendy and mature than previous, more colourful Nintendo ads. Proof that The Big N are definitely 'Born to Play'.
**Nils Walravens, via email**




*Hmm. We're not convinced about this at all – brings back worrying memories of the stupidly surreal third place rubbish that Sony was peddling last year. Still, at least we know now that all Ninty's stuff works underwater.* **Ed**

## 'NEW VISUALS'

I've thought of a new name for Zelda on Gamecube – *The Legend of Zelda:*

## CORRECTION CORNER

In the Q&A column in issue 59, page 25, you wrote 'staying saving now!'. Was 'start saving now!' what you were trying to get at?
**Tom Enderby, Cotham**

*Quite possibly.* **Ed**

In issue 59 I had my sketch of Link printed (thank you!), but you spelled my name wrong. I blame Andrea, you know.
**Sinéad O'Reilly, no address**



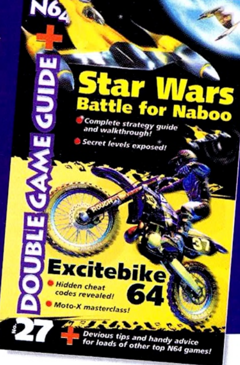
*That's nice, considering she doesn't even work here any more.* **Ed**

In the Double Game Guide + you gave away with issue 57, you claimed on page four that it had come "free with the July issue". Wrong! It actually came stuck to the August issue.
**Michael Newton, Hertfordshire**

*Actually, this wasn't our fault. It's far too complicated a story to explain.* **Ed**

What was going on in NGC/60's Mailbox? The 'text us' section was titled 'TTXXTTUUSS'. I found that slightly unnerving.
**Tom Niall, Birmingham**

*That's what happens when you unchain the art monkeys from their cages, see.* **Ed**




## BONUS LETTERS

Ring me before you come round to make sure I'm in.
**Monkey Boy, Cheshire**

*We did. You were out.* **Ed**

The rat would wet himself.
**George Blaice, Beckton**

*Dirty rat.* **Ed**

It's going to be the shambles!
**Rochelle Hawksley, Lincolnshire**

*That's quality English.* **Ed**

I expect you hate me now.
**Cliff Lenoir, Hants**

*Yep, but then I hate everyone.* **Ed**

A squirrel like me likes to have every nut from the tree!
**Drunken Squirrel, Southampton**

*You again?* **Ed**

I would just like to say a big thank you to the wonderful people at WHSmith, Cambridge.
**Simon Martin, Cambridge**

*I'll allow it.* **Ed**

Last night I stayed up till 1am thinking about Gamecube.
**Oliver Pain, via email**

*That's time well spent.* **Ed**

I know he's lying, he always lies.
**Scott Cumming, via email**

*Ain't that the truth.* **Ed**

Please print this. I need an answer.
**Thomas Newell, Wolverhampton**

*The answer's 'loose chippings'.* **Ed**

Kill PlayStation 2! Kill PlayStation 2! Kill PlayStation 2!
**Peter Selway, Bristol**

*Calm down.* **Ed**

Did you get my letter with all that stuff in?
**Phil Cherrington, Warley**

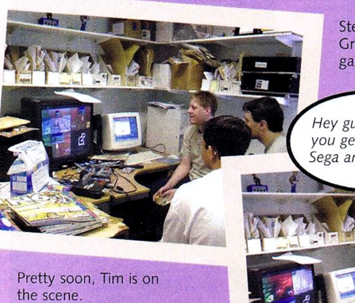
*It took three days to fumigate the office afterwards.* **Ed**

You'd better print this, it took me ages.
**Jonathan Stebles, via email**

*Sorry, out of room.* **Ed**



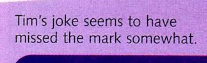

Win a game of your choice. All you have to do is tell us a Nintendo-related joke – and make us laugh. This month: **Jamie Spencer** from **Crewe**



Steve turns up to challenge Greener and Alan to a nice game of Mario Kart.




Pretty soon, Tim is on the scene.




Greener, Alan and Steve pause their game to consider the joke.



Tim's joke seems to have missed the mark somewhat.

NGC Laugh-o-meter

FREEZING COLD · NIPPY · LUKE WARM · WARMING UP · SCORCHING

**Got a great Nintendo-related joke?** Then write to us at Grintendo, Mailbox, **NGC** Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW or alternatively e-mail ngc@futurenet.co.uk putting **Grintendo** in the subject line.




HAVEN'T HEARD IT. BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE IT LESS PAINFUL.





*A Link to the Disney Channel. It would certainly fit in with those new visuals, eh?*
**Abi Tetley, Cuddington**

*How very droll. See page 18 for more on the new Zelda game.* **Ed**

## 'YOUR FACE'

I have been playing the excellent *Perfect Dark* for quite some time. But every time I turn it on, I keep wondering if there is any way of accessing the 'scan your own face in' mode, which Rare abandoned just before the game's

# SO TELL ME THIS

**1. Please tell me that there'll be a text message cart for the GBA. Not all of us want a mobile phone, but we'd still like to text.**
**2. Are Nintendo about to release a backlit GBA?**
**Stuart Rick, Somercotes**

1. Hmm – interesting idea. We'll wager that a clever company like Blaze or Datel could well cook up a GBA add-on that allows you to text your mates. Question is, will a mobile phone be cheaper?
2. Rumours are flying, but Nintendo would upset all and sundry if they released an upgraded GBA so soon after the original's launch. Maybe give it another couple of years.

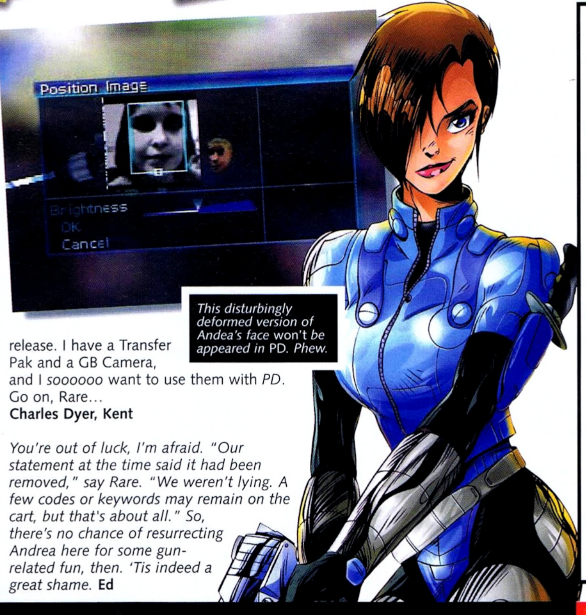
**1. Will *Soul Reaver 2* make an appearance on Gamecube?**
**2. Will any 'naughty' games come to Gamecube, if you know what I mean…**
**3. What games are left to come out on the N64?**
**Michael Raven, Fenham**

1. Eidos' splendid *Shadowman*-esque adventure has been out on DC and PS2 for some time – so we're more likely to see the threequel on Gamecube.
2. Er, we're sure we don't have any idea what you're talking about.
3. *Mario Party 3*, *Pokémon Stadium 2*, *Powerpuff Girls* – and *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2*, now that Electronics Boutique has bagged the rights to distribute it in the UK. And that's it, I'm afraid.

**1. Do you reckon it will be possible to import a Panasonic DVD Gamecube after it's released this year?**
**2. What region of DVDs will it be able to play?**
**Liam Kavanagh, Burtonwood**

1. They're likely to be very hard to come by, and expect to pay 'through the nose', as they say. But yes.
2. Handily, Japan lies in exactly the same DVD region as Europe and the UK – Region 2 – so you'll be able to





This disturbingly deformed version of Andea's face won't be appeared in PD. Phew.

release. I have a Transfer Pak and a GB Camera, and I *soooooo* want to use them with *PD*. Go on, Rare…
**Charles Dyer, Kent**

*You're out of luck, I'm afraid. "Our statement at the time said it had been removed," say Rare. "We weren't lying. A few codes or keywords may remain on the cart, but that's about all." So, there's no chance of resurrecting Andrea here for some gun-related fun, then. 'Tis indeed a great shame.* **Ed**

## 'REALISTIC REFLECTIONS'

Hello chaps. Several times you've harped on about the realistic reflections in *Wave Race: Blue Storm* on Gamecube. But look at this screenshot. Surely the reflections of the starting barrier, the buoys and the building should be reflected *the other way.*
**Gary Miller, via email**

*Er, yes. This doesn't look right at all, does it? Someone at NST was obviously taught by the world's worst physics professor. Still, nice sunset effects there, eh?* **Ed**

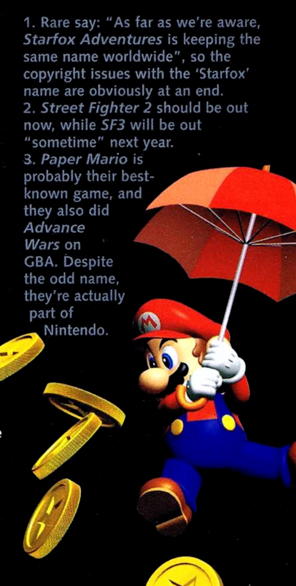
play any movie you fancy on the shiny silver box. Mmm.

**1. Will you be able to use more than one Wavebird joypad at the same time, or do they all work on the same radio frequency?**
**2. Will the Wavebird need batteries?**
**3. When is *Sonic Advance* going to be released?**
**Simon Pierce, Huddersfield**

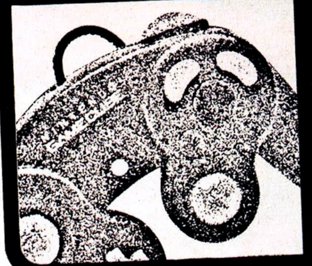
1. There's a tiny switch on the joypad and the base unit that allows you to select from four different frequencies, making four-player possible.
2. Yes.
3. December 20th in Japan, on precisely the same day as *Sonic Adventure 2* on Gamecube. US and UK release dates are still 'TBA'.

**1. Will *Starfox Adventures* have to change its name in Europe, as with the two previous *Starfox* games?**
**2. What are the release dates for *Street Fighter Alpha 3* and *Super Street Fighter II X Revival* on Game Boy Advance?**
**3. What else have Intelligent Systems, the creators of *Mario Kart Super Circuit*, created that I would know of?**
**'Trev', via email**

1. Rare say: "As far as we're aware, ***Starfox Adventures*** is keeping the same name worldwide", so the copyright issues with the 'Starfox' name are obviously at an end.
2. ***Street Fighter 2*** should be out now, while ***SF3*** will be out "sometime" next year.
3. ***Paper Mario*** is probably their best-known game, and they also did ***Advance Wars*** on GBA. Despite the odd name, they're actually part of Nintendo.



# GAMECUBE LAB



**How does Gamecube work? We'll examine a new piece of the miracle machine in every issue. This month...**

# THE JOYPAD

If you've seen or touched Xbox's monstrosity of a controller, you'll appreciate why Nintendo have been leading the art of joypad design since 1982. The Gamecube's two-pronger is another world-beater – we've taken a screwdriver to one of the NGC office's pads to show you why.

## SHOULDER BUTTONS

### SOFT SHOULDER

These are huge and curved on the surface to give your index fingers somewhere comfortable to rest.

#### ANALOGUE




For the first time on a Nintendo pad, these are analogue buttons. Two tiny sliders inside the pad are attached to the L and R buttons, allowing the Gamecube to recognise how far they're being pushed down. That's useful for racing games and the like, giving you a 'virtual pedal' that allows you to accelerate gently or roar off the starting line depending on how hard you're pressing.

#### 'BOTTOM FLOOR'

There's a small disc of rubbery plastic here that pops out only when the L or B button is pushed down to its fullest extent. Do so and you'll feel it click against the digital switch beneath – essentially, you've got an extra button here. Star Wars: Rogue Leader uses this 'bottom floor click' brilliantly – press R lightly and you'll speed up, but push all the way down and your craft's wings fold up for a short boost.

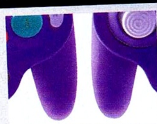
### RUMBLE MOTOR

No need to buy a separate Rumble Pak, as Gamecube's joypad has a rumble motor built-in. It works via the clever use of magnets, spinning an off-centre gear inside the circular chamber to create that mildly disturbing shuddering effect. The bulky casing for the rumble motor is the reason why the Gamecube's pad has such a large, curved behind.



## THE ANALOGUE STICK

### THE PRONGS



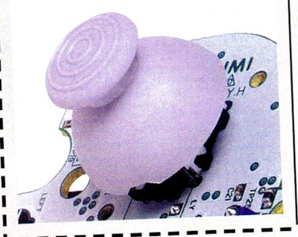
Over long periods of gaming, we've found our ring fingers seizing up, thanks to the bizarre circulation-cutting angle at which they curl around the otherwise-perfect prongs. It's a problem that's only likely to inflict those with large hands – this is a tiny joypad, after all – but it's best to take a break once in a while to avoid your fingers going gangrenous and falling off.

### NICE NIPS!

Shorter and stumpier but with a bigger 'nipple' than its N64 brother. And no strange hole in the middle, either.

#### RUBBER LOVE

Unlike the N64's shiny plastic, the Gamecube's analogue stick is constructed from a textured rubbery material, not unlike the PlayStation 2's sticks. It doesn't necessarily increase grip, but it makes extended play a much more comfortable prospect.





#### YOU'RE A STAR

Genius, this. The eight-sided shape means you can lock the stick in any of the eight compass directions. So, pushing straight forward in Super Monkey Ball, for example, can be done without your simian creeping left or right.

### THE D-PAD

Where would a Nintendo pad be without one of these? In fact, Shigsy and co didn't deem the D-pad a must, and only slapped one on at the final hour. This is tiny compared to its N64 daddy, coming in at exactly the same dimensions as the Game Boy Advance's. Still, it feels nice enough – and gives you practice for using the GBA's D-pad to control Gamecube action via the GC-GBA link cable.

## X AND Y BUTTONS



They're back! X and Y buttons first appeared on the SNES joypad – now they return, having had something of a facelift. The kidney-bean shape might look odd, but they make finding the buttons with your fingers a cinch. Simply rock your thumb up or right from the A button and there they are – no having to peer down to get your bearings.

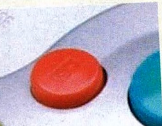
# THE MAIN BUTTONS

## A TO B

You probably won't notice the biggest change here – A is now above B rather than below it, matching the Game Boy Advance's layout.

### B BUTTON

On earlier GC pads, this came in the same bean style as X and Y – Nintendo presumably altered it to avoid you accidentally sliding your finger over it in heated moments. Now, it's precisely the same size, shape and texture as the N64's Start button, and likely not to be used quite as much as the N64's B.



### A BUTTON

The big one. This is just about the biggest button ever to grace a console joypad, and that makes it a bizarrely pleasurable thing to press – it's just a shame there's no game yet that asks you to really hammer away at the green beggar. Shigsy's dream is to create a GC title that uses just the analogue stick and this big green fella, so watch this space.





## THE Z BUTTON

Difficult to reach and lacking 'give', this plainly isn't intended to work the same way as the N64 Z-trigger. Nintendo claim it's there mainly as an extra 'option' button – to activate a smart bomb in shoot-'em-ups or suchlike. Don't worry about first-person shooters, as the R-button is perfectly placed to act as the trigger for a gun.

## THE C-STICK

Replacing the N64's C-buttons – which Shigsy always hated – comes this neat little analogue stick.

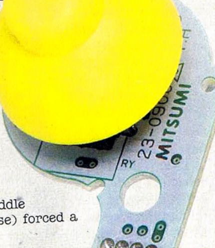
### FEEL IT!



The C-stick – which has a C stamped on its head so you never forget its name – is made from the same rubbery material as its grey friend on the left, and works in exactly the same way. Admittedly, the flat 'stick' part doesn't lend it much grip, but Luigi's Mansion, which uses the C-stick to direct the plumber's torch and hoover, works just fine. Aside from Wave Race, we've yet to see a game that uses the yellow stick to allow you to guide the camera around at will.

### LATE ADDITION?

Peering into the joypad's innards, it's interesting to note that the C-stick is stuck onto its own little slab of circuit board, itself hanging oddly from the main board by a series of coloured wires. That seems to suggest that the yellow stick was a last-minute addition to GC's controller – or that late changes (Shigsy did fiddle with the 'nub' just before release) forced a quick fix.





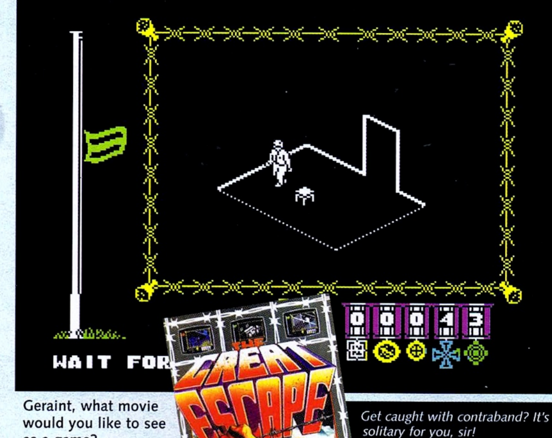

# Q WHAT MOVIE WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE MADE INTO A GAMECUBE GAME?

## IDEAS FACTORY

**Green, you're a fool. Alan, speak some sense to us.**
Anyone remember a film called Westworld? Yul Brynner played an android programmed to play the part of a Wild West baddie in a theme park, except all the androids go nuts and start killing people. It's quite similar to Jurassic Park (it was written and directed by Michael Crichton), except there are four worlds you'd play in – a wild west one, a mediaeval one, a Roman one and a futuristic one. However, you wouldn't be able to tell who was an android and who was a normal tourist, and neither would they. So you'd have to work out whether to gun them down like a dawg or rescue them. Fantastic, or what?

1985 and it hasn't aged a bit. Well, except it has. Why doesn't Rutger do beer ads any more?

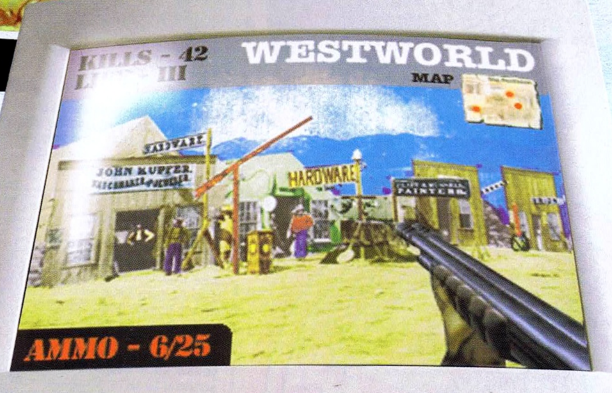
**Greener. Spill forth your wildest fantasies…**
I've always wanted to play a game of Richard Donner's classic 1985 romance adventure Ladyhawke. It starred a very young Matthew Broderick, attempting to reunite Rutger Hauer, who is a wolf by night, with Michelle Pfeiffer, who is a hawk by day. You could play as each character, collecting stuff to break the curse and reunite the lovers. More importantly, it would have a fantastic '80s-style synth soundtrack, just like in the film…




Get caught with contraband? It's solitary for you, sir!

**Geraint, what movie would you like to see as a game?**
I know it's already been done on the Spectrum, but I reckon it's time for another version of Christmas classic *The Great Escape*. You see, what Ocean did to make the game special was not stick too slavishly to what happens in the film – so you could dress up as a Nazi guard, explore the tunnel network and all that sort of business. There would be a number of different ways of escaping, such as disguise, tunnelling, using wire cutters on the fence, bribing people and so on. You probably wouldn't fight too many people, but there would be plenty of talking, making friends, setting things up and so on. It might be useful to have something like the Bombers' Notebook in *Majora's Mask* to keep track of everything.

**And Jud, it'd be a driving game for you, would it?**
No, no. I don't think anyone's managed to pull off a decent Wild West game, and what better movie to use as a basis than Sam Peckinpah's riotous mess The Wild Bunch? I'm thinking particularly of the fantastic slow-motion end sequence where one of the old geezers keeps hammering away with the Gatling gun – when he gets killed, another one appears to take his place. Now that would make one hell of a multiplayer scenario, don't you reckon?




### NOW IT'S YOUR CHANCE!

*See how pathetic these ideas are? Send in your own and show us how it's done – the cleverer the better. What movies would make fantastic Gamecube games? The best ones will get put in next month's Reader's Forum, so get your thinking caps on. You can email us at ngc@futurenet.co.uk, or use the more traditional method and write to: Ideas Factory, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.*



# LAST MONTH

## IN IDEAS FACTORY WE ASKED YOU...

**Q** What do you reckon Mario's backpack is for?



Water tank? Or semi-intelligent fish dispenser? Sometimes we despair, frankly.

## JEALOUS BROTHER

I think Mario was so jealous of Luigi's fame, he nicked Luigi's backpack! I think the game is all themed around evading an angry Luigi, while trying to lay traps for him, just like in *Saberwulf*.
**Jamie Purvis, Coatbridge**

## PLUMBING

I think he keeps his plumbing tools in there to fix all of those pipes that keep dripping and making puddles. He could have a mop in there as well so he can soak up the puddles after he fixes the leaking pipes.
**Angel, via email**

## CRAZY SUN FUN

My idea for Mario's backpack is that, like in *Zelda: Majora's Mask* the sun has gone mad, causing strange things to happen. Mario has a limited time to stop the sun from scorching the earth. This job isn't easy, so Mario uses the backpack for extra abilities (like a jetpack). As Mario collects sunshine coins the water meter will go up, and once you collect all of them, the meter is full. The backpack then makes it rain. When the heat stops, there will be no more strange things going on. Mario now moves to the next level and goes through the same process all over again. I think that instead of the game being set in the Mushroom Kingdom, it is set in the real world instead.
**Chris Giles, Oxford**

## CRAZY GUN FUN

I think Mazza's new backpack is obviously a gun of some sort. Last year, Shigsy hinted at a new, more mature side of Mario – and here it is. The backpack is used to suck up coins to use as ammo against enemies. This could also have great multiplayer shoot-'em-up possibilities… imagine *GoldenEye* made by Nintendo for Gamecube featuring our favourite plumber and all his mates. Ace!
**Benjamin Tatlow, London**

## EH?

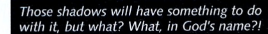
God! The guy wears a backpack and everyone is all over him! Give the guy a break, will you?
**samuri01, via email**

## GONE FISHING

I like the idea of Mario keeping water in there, but maybe Shigsy's got into fishing as well as gardening. So you'd be able to suck up all different sorts of fish as well, which would give Mario different powers, depending on which combinations of fish he had – a bit like *Kirby 64*, really. You could then shoot fiery fishes at watery enemies and that sort of thing. The puzzling opportunities for this would be immense, as all the different fish would have different levels of AI and personalities, from straightforward stupid exploding fish to subtle, laser-guided sniper fish. I'll stop now.
**Henry Whiting, Cheltenham**

## IT'S A GAS

Who says that clear stuff in Mario's backpack is water? Why couldn't it be a colourless gas? You could even teach the little youngsters something about chemistry by using carbon dioxide to put out fires and so on. You could feed a breathless creature some oxygen to help him out. I know Miyamoto said the new Mario would be more mature, so he could even employ poisonous gasses, like tear gas, to get rid of enemies.
**Sarah Whittam, Dorchester**



Those shadows will have something to do with it, but what? What, in God's name?!








The rocket belt made negotiating the icy mountains a breeze. Noisy beggar, though.

You just don't see people being blasted out of cannons any more. Shame.

# THE MAKING OF... PILOTWINGS

**Every month, we'll be revisiting classic N64 games with the people who made them. This month, Paradigm's Gary Bandy reveals the untold story behind a flight-based fantasy.**

In 1994, Paradigm, a company best known for their flight simulators, were about as skilled in the art of videogame creation as Noel Edmonds. To a company that gave half of their office space over to two room-sized, multi-million dollar supercomputers, game consoles were little more than toys.

In 1995, all that changed. After completing a short visual demo of a flying helicopter for Nintendo's as-yet-unfinished N64, shown behind closed doors at that year's E3 show, Paradigm assumed Nintendo would next ask them to create a set of 3D modelling tools for the console. Instead, The Big N demanded an actual *game* – a sequel to the classic SNES title, *Pilotwings*.

### You cannot be serious

The leap from serious simulation to gaming was a tricky one for Paradigm, and Nintendo's vague concept for *Pilotwings 64* – 'Imagine an island and you're floating through the skies above' – hardly helped.

"We were more used to lists of exact specifications," recalls Gary Bandy, then one of Paradigm's lead artists. "So we kept asking Nintendo questions – what should go there, what should that look like. They told us they didn't want to shackle us. It was a new experience – and a liberating one."

The main aim of the 55 employees who began work on *Pilotwings 64* in June of 1995, working in a sterile laboratory environment under the cold

## WHY PILOTWINGS 64 WAS A CLASSIC

**STUNNING ENVIRONMENTS** *Paradigm's past experience as a developer for 3D flight simulators combined with N64's groundbreaking hardware made for sprawling, impossibly detailed islands. "We were teaching Nintendo how to make the best use of the console," says Gary.*

**TRICKY CHALLENGES** *Having to guide a jet pack through a nightmarishly narrow underground cave or steer through mid-air rings at 300kph proved too tough for some. "But then some N64 owners rang us up to say they'd finished Pilotwings in 12 hours," remembers Gary.*

**TOP VEHICLES** *ranging from a gyrocopter to a hang-glider to a ridiculous pair of bouncing boots – and it was they way they moved, responding to every gentle brush of the N64's revolutionary analogue stick, that truly amazed.*

**SECRET AREAS** *The game's team of three artists – one of whom was Mr Bandy himself – built in hundreds of 'easter eggs'. "My favourite was the tiny petrol station hidden on the Little States island," reveals Gary. "Touch down there and your gyrocopter's refuelled!"*

## MAGIC MOMENT: FIRE! FIRE!

*Pilotwings 64 was packed with some neat touches – not least the blood-curdling scream that you'd hear upon guiding your hang-glider through an oil rig's flaming smokestack, and the sight of your unfortunate aviator burnt to a blackened cinder. "We even made him trail black smoke for a few seconds," laughs Gary. "These details were all about making our target audience happy, asking what would make a younger player laugh." Kids today, eh?*











## PILOTWINGS 1993

Before *Pilotwings 64* came *Pilotwings* on the SNES, coded by the magicians at Nintendo itself. Using the console's infamous 'Mode 7', *Pilotwings* brought huge landscapes to your TV, and – like its 1997 offspring – asked you to pilot small planes through rings, skydive onto red-and-white targets, and use a rocket belt to bash balls around the sky. Despite featuring such oddly-named folk as 'Lance' and 'Big Al', the game attracted plenty of fans – hence The Big N's decision to bring a sequel to its new machine.




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gaze of those twin Silicon Graphics supercomputers, was to build the game's four huge islands.

"The N64 was fairly accurately described at the time as 'a Silicon Graphics workstation in a box'," recalls Gary. "So, technically, we were never going to find coding massive environments too much of a challenge. It was the actual gameplay that we were unsure about."

**"In many ways we were leading Nintendo, who only had experience of 2D graphics."**

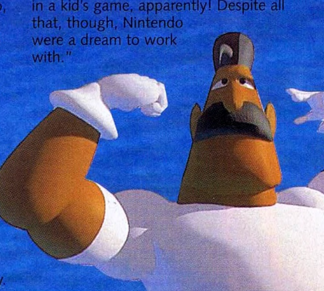
### Overseas aid

To solve the gameplay problem, Nintendo flew over a producer and a designer from EAD to work on how *Pilotwings 64* would play. Another team in Japan tested the game as it was designed and fired back comments and ideas, freeing Paradigm's employees up to create the stunning scenery.

"We knew 3D, we knew realtime, we knew graphics," says Gary. "In many ways, we were leading Nintendo, who'd only really had experience with 2D and weren't sure how to utilise the third dimension. That was where a lot of their 'Dream Team' of developers failed – they didn't know how to cope with this visual revolution."

### Little console-ation

As Paradigm developed, Nintendo tinkered to ensure that their strong ideas about *Pilotwings*' vehicles, challenges and handling had a big influence. "Being flight sim specialists, we went for realistic handling," recalls Gary. "Nintendo asked we tone it down for ease of play. And my saloon bar in Little States' Texas area was taken out – not allowed in a kid's game, apparently! Despite all that, though, Nintendo were a dream to work with."

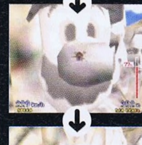


## MAGIC MOMENT MARIO/WARIO

*The appearance of Mario's face on Pilotwings' virtual Mount Rushmore was inevitable – what did come as a surprise was that if you fired your human cannonball straight at Mazza's nose, his features would be transformed into the spiked moustache, giant conk and arched eyebrows of the one and only Wario. That fella really does get everywhere.*









## WINGING IT




*Most Pilotwings players will recall this hang-glider nightmare, plunging off a cliff-edge and attempting to steer the plummetting craft through a series of glowing rings. Trousers soiled? Check.*




*The challenge of destroying targets with missiles came about by accident, says Gary. "We based the gyrocopter on an existing Paradigm 3D helicopter model – which featured side-mounted missiles."*




*Gary's favourite vehicle, the rocket belt – plainly not designed for meandering through narrow caves. "I liked to just float around, inspecting the level features I'd designed," recalls Gary.*




*Ah, the monster. When it came to photographing the beast, he didn't prove as shy as you'd expect – but the game's questionable rating system dismissed seemingly perfect pics. Grrr.*

## THE SKY'S THE LIMIT







"Nintendo rarely rejected anything outright," remembers Gary. "But their ideas would have us scurrying off to try new things." Such experimentation led to brilliant ideas like the sky-diving – battling to slot your man into a formation of four free-fallers – and blowing up the unnervingly large Mecha Man with the gyrocopter's handy supply of rockets.







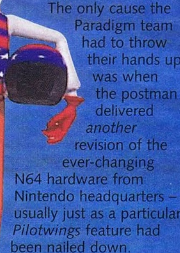





## BIRDMAN

One of *Pilotwing*'s simplest bonus modes, but also arguably its best. No objectives, no challenges – just you, a pair of wings strapped to your back, and the whole island to glide around at your leisure. "Part of the reason it was so relaxing was the music," says Gary. "It was created by a friend of one of Paradigm's founders. He basically sat down next to the coders with his keyboard, and played riff after riff after riff alongside the gameplay in order to create music that matched."





The only cause the Paradigm team had to throw their hands up was when the postman delivered *another* revision of the ever-changing N64 hardware from Nintendo headquarters – usually just as a particular *Pilotwings* feature had been nailed down.

"We'd get one bit finished," recalls Gary, "Then – wait a second – here's a new version of the hardware that does something like speed up the frame rate by .02 milliseconds. So we were forced to fiddle with *Pilotwings* again, alter our development tools, and so on and so forth."

Gradually, though, the sprawling islands took shape. "A mountain might start out as regular mountain," recalls Gary. "But then we'd change it to a volcano with a lake on top, then we'd add a waterfall, then cut a tiny cave opening into the side, then extend that opening to create a tunnel running under the mountain. It was almost an evolutionary process."

### Prepare for landing

Paradigm's focus on visuals meant that, even as late as February '96, four months before *Pilotwing 64*'s launch, Gary wasn't quite sure what shape the game would take.

"*Pilotwings* had to be done in time for the Nintendo 64's Japanese launch in June 1995," he remembers. "That gave us just 11 months from start to finish. We worked insane hours, and towards the end we'd dragged 15 programmers over from elsewhere in the company and accomodated five more Nintendo employees to help furiously finish up. Our company mantra became 'failure is not an option'." Sure enough, *Pilotwings* met the deadline, launched alongside the N64 hardware, and sold 1.25 million copies worldwide.

"It was total fear for me before launch," recalls Gary. "There were no other N64 games out there – we still had yet to see *Mario 64* or *Wave Race* – so we had no idea whether we'd done a good job or not. But I got to walk the halls at E3 '96, and there was my work up on a 50-foot screen, and all kinds of people ooh-ing and ah-ing over it. It was immensely satisfying to know that our 70-hour weeks had been worth it all. That's a feeling I hope I never forget." NGC

# LEVEL TOUR: HOLIDAY ISLAND



## MAGIC MOMENT: NIGHT MOVES

*Target-shooting at night in a stunning recreation of the Grand Canyon – just one example of the breathtaking visual magic that Pilotwings 64's team of talented artists conjured up. And this came just moments after you'd soared past a space shuttle taking off. Gasp!*



*"Crescent Island was the first level to be created," recalls Gary. "All four of the Pilotwings artists helped put that one together over several months." The goal was to create as realistic a holiday island as possible – Nintendo, having seen the earliest version, gave it the thumbs up.*



*Roughly half a year into development, Nintendo altered the N64's joypad, giving the analogue stick's base a six-sided shape that made pushing precisely forward much easier. At a stroke, many of Pilotwings' trickiest moments became a whole lot simpler.*

*Fountains such as these added to the strain on the N64's hardware, and Gary and the team had to learn to pull back on the detail when the console started struggling. "It was a real wrench," he says, "Because we'd become attached to all the features we'd put in there!"*



*"You expect a console's best visuals from third or fourth-generation games," says Gary. "But I think there was a lot going on in Pilotwings that really showed off the power of the Nintendo 64 from day one." Few would argue after feasting their peepers on sights such as this.*



*Nintendo were happy to give Paradigm free reign to squeeze in their own bizarre graphical touches, secret areas and touches of realism. "While designing Little States," says Gary, "one of our artists suddenly said, 'I want to put the St Louis arches in'. So he just went ahead and did it."*



*Pulling up and gaping at a view of the whole island was a standout moment. "We always wondered what the aim of the game was going to be," says Gary. "Then we realised that really, there wasn't one. If you wanted to deviate from the mission and just fly around, you could."*






**Ahh... blazing gas fire, mince pies, a big mug of cheap cooking sherry – but no Yuletide is complete without a cartwarming yarn or four...**



A LOVE TOO YOUNG

tight, like a rubber bung.

What pain and sadness hid behind that mask? Anju could only guess as her slender fingers delicately traced its plastic outline. The candlelight flickered off its pale, luminescent surface as midnight drew nearer by the moment. How could she even guess what Kafei was thinking? Was he overwhelmed with joy at seeing her once again? Or was he silently weeping because of the insane, grinning moon that was about to burn them all alive in a frenzy of deranged malice?

Anju could see Kafei's adolescent-sized shoulders trembling slightly. His face tilted down as he started to remove the mask. Her poise was momentarily fractured when Kafei accidentally turned into a nine-foot screaming Goron, but soon the agonised rock monster was replaced by the small purple-haired boy Kafei had become in

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A LOVE TOO YOUNG

the last few days. She couldn't deny it – even though the unmistakable light was behind the young boy's eyes, there was just something wrong about getting married to a seven-year-old. But it was too late to have doubts.

Kafei's sad eyes welled up as his quavering, not-yet-broken voice asked, "Shall we put on the Couple's Mask? We only have 27 seconds left to live". Anju decided she couldn't wait too long to think about it, so she pulled out her handkerchief, licked it, used it to clean some chocolate from her groom's face, and replied.

"Of course, darling."

"Could you lift it down for me? I can't reach." Anju giggled, though it was only to stifle the tears. She walked past the little elf boy, who was inexplicably wearing a large cow mask, and unwrapped the treasured Couple's Mask. What she wasn't expecting was a large

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PLAYING WITH CONKER

suitably moist.

Berri kept working through the pain barrier. Her arms pumping furiously, she tried to wipe her mind clean of the frustration that had been dogging her all day. Why hadn't he called? Her exercise regime demanded that she work out at this time of day, but today she was glad of the distraction. It gave her a chance to concentrate on forgetting that damned womaniser who'd been plaguing her for months.

He'd stumbled into her life almost by accident, after she'd seen him fighting some fire imps in the middle of a cesspool. Sure, his method of dispatching the flaming demons was unorthodox, but that was all part of Conker. He was a rough diamond, an untamed spirit, a raging bull. Berri could never tell what he was going to do next, but the horrible thing about it

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PLAYING WITH CONKER

was that this was part of his appeal. The danger sometimes scared her, but what scared her more was the fact that she enjoyed it. He could really move her, touch her in places that…

A strange sound interrupted her train of thought. It sounded like the strained gurgling of a wounded or distressed animal. Berri tensed – she couldn't bear to see animals suffering – and moved towards the door anxiously. It was then that she realised why Conker hadn't called her…

The first thing she noticed was the smell. She found the lager and stale urine repellent, but the smell was exciting to her because it meant Conker was home. She couldn't open the door at first, since Conker was dozing against it. How endearing, she mused. Berri set about putting the sleepy squirrel to bed, as she did three or four times most weeks. "What a man", she thought to

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WATER SPORTS

somewhat slippery, rather like a nun's.

"Nigel, Nigel, Nigel… I could say it all night."

"I adore hearing you say my name, Akari, my love." Nigel Carver was everything a young woman in a wetsuit could ever want. He looked particularly devastating tonight, resplendent in his finest grey-and-yellow-striped life jacket. His companion looked wonderful too. Akari's style was maverick – she defied the fashion gurus who told her that cut-off jeans went out in the mid-'80s. But she was an astoundingly successful sportswoman, no-one could deny her that. And beautiful, too, despite being barely old enough to hold on to a throbbing jetbike's handlebars.

Presumptuously, Nigel leaned over to kiss her. This tender moment was somewhat spoiled by the sudden intrusion of a disembodied Dick van Dyke-alike voice over Nigel's right shoulder.

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WATER SPORTS

"GOOD SHOW! THAT'S THE WAY, MATE!".

The ever-present voice was the dark secret he'd tried to conceal from Akari, to no avail. It haunted him, tortured him, forbade him to ever get close to anyone. But he was damned if that voice was going to get in the way of his love for this nimble young water nymph. Smiling, he gently clapped his hands twice, as if motioning for an unseen waiter.

"Is that your seal impression, Nigel?" Akari mischievously giggled. Her answer came in the surprising form of a quartet of violin-playing penguins, riding on the expansive back of an enormous blue whale. With a tremendous splash, the whale showered the lovers with a fine mist of salty spray. When Akari wiped her eyes, she could see a table laden with delicacies and surrounded by large garden candles resting on the back of the whale. Gasping, Akari leant forward to take the

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## CONFLICT OF PASSION

wiped the rim.

Far below, countless high-octane cars screamed past at supersonic speeds, trying to barge each other off into the oblivion that lay waiting miles below the anti-gravity race track. But none of that interested Peach as she stood atop her hovering platform. The wind cruelly whipped and tossed her long, flaxen locks but her steely gaze remained locked on her mortal enemy. The enemy who had for countless years repeated his role in the same sinister yet fatally-flawed plot – capture, torture, rescue. It was all so familiar, yet there was something very different about this time. Now she was on an equal footing with her reptilian tormentor.

"Just try it, you lizard creep," she trilled in her girlish yet compellingly lucid voice. She recalled all those long nights spent shivering in dank dungeons, waiting for the one in red to

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CONFLICT OF PASSION

set her free. But time had moved on. Mario was no longer the man he used to be – he'd put on weight and started sporting a stupid backpack, whose contents he refused to divulge.

She stared at Bowser. Or rather, at Bowser's muscly turtle midriff, as he towered over her menacingly. She thought she understood those inscrutable eyes after so many years, but recently something had changed about her arch-nemesis. Bowser cleared his throat.

"Gwaaaah! Prepare to have a baseball bat rammed into your pretty stomach!" Somehow his voice betrayed that his heart wasn't really in it. Perhaps the 33rd five-minute battle today, on top of the single-player quest he'd embarked on this morning, was too much for the grizzled one. Either way, when he double-jumped up, trying to smash his spiny shell into Peach's soft, rounded body, he accidentally landed right on her

## PRIMED FOR LOVE

wouldn't tell the police.

Samus lay, tossing from side to side, trying desperately to get some sleep. Her mind was filled with strange amoeba-like insects, buzzing around with no visible means of flight. A seasoned bughunter just couldn't leave work at work – Ripley had taught her that long ago. The other thing keeping her awake was the suppurating chafe marks near her joints. Why had she never bothered with the cotton wool joint-padding that the other mercenaries swore was so essential? She thought them as namby-pamby at the time, but was beginning to see the error of her ways.

There was a knock at the door. Startled, Samus jumped up to ceiling level, crushed herself into a tiny ball and dropped a spherical grenade against the door, blowing it to plywood smithereens. As the smoke cleared, she could make out the dashing silhouette of an

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PRIMED FOR LOVE

uninvited visitor. The intruder spoke:

"Aran! Get your kit together, soldier! You're shipping out." Was Samus dreaming? Was the man of her dreams really coming to her room? "In the showers. Now!"

"But, sir…"

"No excuses. Now!"

"Sir, I can't. You see…" In one fluid motion, Samus removed her helmet. The officer gasped. Samus hadn't removed her helmet in fifteen years, and her skin was pale and puckered by lack of sunlight. She'd always thought moisturiser was something that the other girls used, and looked like Darth Vader when he took his helmet off as a result.

"I'm a woman!"

The wizened officer, in all his years of confronting intergalactic insectoid life forms, had never seen anything like this before. He let out a high-pitched yelp and bolted. Samus, shocked, looked around

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## THE WEDDING PARTY

right up against it, leaving an unsightly bruise.

The pair walked hand-in-hand along the forest path. It was a fine afternoon for a gentle stroll through Woody Woods, and the lovers laughed, recalling what the locals had told them about the place being full of "strange things, mushrooms and stars…"

Daisy was often overlooked by men, but for no good reason. She was beautiful and intelligent – and far more resistant to being kidnapped than Peach, who always got all the attention, even if it was only from wrongdoers. Yet still she'd managed to net herself quite a catch in the sophisticated, complex enigma known as Waluigi. He was also one of the few men around who wasn't grossly obese. Sure, her parents didn't approve of his chequered past

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THE WEDDING PARTY

and his bad temper, but Daisy just couldn't resist that adorable twinkle in his eye when he laughed.

The twisting path led the pair past a delightfully gnarled elm, which they thought about carving their names on. However, as Waluigi moved towards the tree, it spat a shiny golden key in his face. Behind them, a mole sprang out of the ground and forced them to change direction on to another path.

"Eh heh heh! It's-a the key to your heart, Daisy!" Waluigi chuckled as he rubbed his bruised schnozz.

"Oh, you rascal!" she blushed in reply, and gave him a peck right on its red, swollen tip.

Walking and laughing together, they continued. Just for fun, they'd roll a dice and then hop that many paces forwards, sometimes engaging in a minigame or two. They were so preoccupied, they hardly noticed the

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FROM THE MAKERS OF NGC


end
Dear NGC,
The portly funster's back in town!
He's got prezzies for one and all-i-o!
Better be bad or you won't get any,
'Cos it's-a me, Wario!
I hate you all.
I demand you come and see me in Aladdin at the Sheffield Empire before the 13th of January!
Dear Paul,
Dear Geraint
Dear NGC,
Peace to you and yours at this festive time
Love the new look, gentlemen.
Christmas sends her love.
Cmdr James Bond, Esq.
Dear NGC,
Christmas is a time for change,
New starts for everyone.
I've got myself a brand-new look,
Is everyone up for some fun?
I sent you something in the mail,
It may be a sword, but don't worry.
I just can't mask my love for you,
So get me done Shigsy, and hurry!
Sorry about the rubbish card there's only one shop in town, and they bring back the same stock every three days!
I've had a cool makeover which has been turning a lot of heads recently. I'll show it to you next yea
Maybe.
Link
Dear NGC,
Stealthily creeping towards your house,
Boots crunching in the snow,
The girl's nightvision spies an open fire,
Just waiting for the Bombspy to blow.
Love and kisses to my favourite aliens,
Jo
Dear Mark

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